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tentiam, ad id, quod est actu. Vult enim Aristoteles id quod a secundo potentia ad id, quod secundū actu est, deducitur, nō alterari, nec pati. Vnde uel nō est motus, uel est alia species motus. Siquis enim uult hunc motū dicere, aliam speciē motus dixerit præter eas, quæ in Physica dictæ sunt, & naturam innouauerit. Deinde confirmat etiā, ꝙ nō est motus, a secundo potentia, ad secundū actu progressus. Dicit enim motū esse imperfect. actū: motus.n. ab imperfecto ad perfectum fertur, & patitur, & alteratur. Quod est autē secundū potentia, perfectū est. Perfectorū autē actus nō est motus, sed aliquid aliud præter motū. Non est ergo motus a secundo potentia deductio ad secundum actu, sed mutatio.

Sentire ergo simile est ei, quod est dicere solum intrinsecus, & intelligere. Quando autem iucundum, uel molestum, ueluti affirmans, uel negans persequitur, uel fugit: & est delectari, uel molestia affici, operari sensitiua medietate ad bonum, uel malum, quatenus talia.

Discerni intellectū contēplatiuū ab actiuo, & quid dicit? ꝙ sicut sensus, qui habet tantū dicere intrinsecus. i. cognoscere, & intellectu comprehendere, dicitur contēplatiuus. qui autem habet, ut molestia afficiatur & delectetur, affirmare ait, & persequi, quoniā ipsum suscipimus, & ad ipsum uenimus. Suscipere ergo ipsum dixit & affirmare. Molestū autem negamus: ipsum enim non suscipimus, sed & fugimus. Tanquam aūt inquit, iudicatiua facultate actiui intellectus iudicatur bonū & malum. Ne ergo omnia de eodē accipe. Deinde quoniā medium est superius, idem esse subiecto sensum, quod appetitū: cū oporteret aūt dicere, ꝙ actiuus intel

dum malum rebus uti uenereis: & est molestiam exhibens bonum, esse circa omnia continentem: Ne ergo putaueris actiui iucundum idem esse, quod eius bonum.

Sicut autē aer pupillā talem facit, ipsa aūt aliud: & auditus similiter: extremū autem unum, & una medietas, ei autē esse plura tribuunt. Quoniā autē diiudicat, qua ratione differat dulce & calidū, est quidem & prius: dicendum autem & sic: est enim unum quidpiam. sic autem ut & terminus.

De communi uehiculo nunc agitur, & quid dicit ꝙ sicut aer pupillam alterat, & pupilla spiritum, & ille facultatem crystallinam, & ipsa excitatur, & uidet, cū sit una. In eo autem, quod est esse, hoc est, ratione, ab alijs iudicātibus diuersa est. Nam & auditus similiter habet unū, quod iudicat: sicut ergo in his, sic in intellectu est cōmune uehiculū, quod quidē est extremū discretiuum mediū, & primū quidē dicit contextus de uisu, & auditu: illud autē, sic habet intellectus uehiculū, non dicit: sed cū prima dixisset Philosophus, reliqua subaudiri permisit, quæ sunt de intellectu, & ad alia cōuertitur, dicens, ꝙ sic quidē particularis sensus iudicat: albū, & dulce non ipse iudicat: sed quisnā sit superius diximus, & nunc quoq; dicemus, nēpe cōmunis sensus: ipse.n. inquit, horū est cōe uehiculū, existēs, inquit, ut terminus. Terminum aūt nunc uocat centrū circuli, a quo multæ lineæ procedūt.

Et hęc quidē in proportione & numero, quem habent ad utrunq; ut illa ad seinuicem.

Quid dicit? Quod, sicut terminus, hoc centrū, sic habet & cōmunis sensus, & proportione, & numero. Proportione quidem, ꝙ sicut centrum se habet ad utranq; ex his lineis, quæ a centro procedunt, sic habet & communis sensus ad

sum. Si hoc enim nō sic habet, est rationi cōsentaneum dicere, q̄ tu quidem hoc, ego uero illud sensserim. Hæc autē ratione differunt, q̄ hic quidē agat, ille uero cognoscat: & in hac quidem est opinione Aristoteles. Porro & secundū ipsa subiecta cōmunionem habent, & societatem. Quod enim bonum, etiam uerum est: quod autem malū, falsum. Sed differunt, quoniam bonum ad aliquid dicitur. quod enim ad animam bonū est in uirtutibus, hoc est malū corpori. Verum autem nō dicitur ad aliquid: sed semper idem est uerū & honestum. Neq; enim Plato est admittendus dicens, q̄ furenti ensis depositū confiteri, uerum quidē, malum autem. Verū enim ſm Aristotelem, quatenus uerum, semper honestum. Sc endū autem, q̄ etiamsi diximus similē esse cōmunem sensum intellectui: quoniam, sicut cōmunis sensus est terminatio omniū particularium sensuū, sic & omniū intelligibiliū terminatio est intellectus, & cogitabilū, & opinabiliū: ueruntamen est quædā differentia. In sensibus enim est alius cōmunis sensus præter quinq; in intelligibilibus autem non est aliud, quod cognoscit præter tria: sed unū est ex tribus, quod cognoscit differentiā. Intellectus enim, cū sit pars triū: & opinionis dico, & cogitationis, & intellectus: ipse nouit differentiam intelligibiliū ad cogitabilia, & cogitabilium ad opinabilia. Hæc est ergo differētia intellectus a cōmuni sensu. Sciendū autem, q̄ sicut cōmunis sensus nō solum ea nouit, quæ cognoscunt sensus particulares, sed & aliam præter hæc: nouit enim cōmunis sensus differentiā sensiliū, quæ cadunt sub sensum, hoc sensibus, ut iam diximus, nescientibus: Particulares enim sensus dulce & albū tantum cognoscunt: Cōmunis autem sensus non hæc tantū, sed & ipsorū nouit differentiā: sic ergo & intellectus nō solū ntelligibilia, & cogitabila, & opinabilia nouit, sed & eorū differentiam. quæ enim deteriora cognoscit, & meliora scit. quæ autē meliora nouit, deteriora nescit. Differentiā ergo cogitabilū, & intelligibilū uel cogitabilium & opinabilū non nouit, nec cogi-

idem est subiecto, quod cogitatio: est autē ratione diuersus: nam & intellectus a cogitatione est subiecto diuersus.

Sed sicut uidere propriū, uerum: si autē homo, quod est album, uel non, non semper uerum.

Quid est illud: uidere proprium? pro eo quod est, quod est sibi proprium uidere, & proprium negotium gerere, et uidere, quod est album, & solum, non itidem autem & substantiam, cui quidem hoc album inest: hoc enim nō semper uerum. Fallitur enim quandoq; sensus circa sensilia per accidens, sicut superius dictum est.

Sic autem habent, quæcunq; sine materia.

Quid dicit? q̄ sicut se habet sensus ad ꝓpria sensilia et nō propria: sic & quæ sunt sine materia, ad intelligibilia. sine materia aūt dicit cogitationem, & intellectū: Immateriales enim sunt hæ facultates, & cogitabilia, & intelligibilia sunt rursus res immateriales, & intelligibilia quidē, quæ quidem etiā simplicia dicit, ait cū uisu habere proportionem, qui proprium uidet: cogitabilia autem, quæ etiam composita appellat, dicuntur cum uisu habere proportionem, qui gerit alienum negotium, & qui non uult solum cognoscere, quod album, sed etiam quod albus homo, uel equus.

Idem est autem scientia quæ est secundū actum, quod res. Quæ est autem secundum potentiam, tempore prior in uno.

Rem dicit, scibile. Dicit ergo scientiā, quæ actu est, idem esse, quod scibile. Nō cognoscit. n. sc ētia scibile, nisi ei assimiletur, & fiat quale ipsum. Hoc aūt nō temere interiectū est: sed qm̄ de intelligibilibus agitur: intelligibilia aūt per mediā scientiā fiunt intelligibilia, & intellectu cognoscunt: propter ea scientiæ mentionē fecit, dicens, scientiā, quę actu est, similem esse scibili. quæ autem est secundū potentiam scientia, est prior scientia, quæ est secundum actum in uno indiuiduo.

Omnino autem & simpliciter, nec tempore qui

Exhibuit J. Reynolds
S. Coll. Exon. Oxon.
1660

Arma virumq; cano — Virg.

Sam. Lavington
1764

THE CHRISTIAN IN Compleat Armour,

Or, a

TREATISE

OF THE

Saints War against the Devil, wherein a Discovery is made of that grand enemy of God and his People, in his Policies, Power, Seat of his Empire, Wickedneſſe, and chief deſign he hath againſt the Saints.

A

Magazin opend

FROM

Whence the Chriſtian is furniſhed with Spiritual Armes for the battel, help't on with his Armour, and taught the uſe of his Weapon, together with the happy iſſue of the whole Warre.

The First Part.

The third Edition.

By *William Gurnall*, M. A. of *Emanuel* Colledge, now Paſtor of the Church of Chriſt, at *Lavenham* in *Suffolk*.

Imprimatur. EDMUND CALAMY.

LONDON, Printed for *Ralph Smith*, at the Bible in *Cornhill*, near the *Royal Exchange*. 1658.

THE

To my Dearly Beloved Friends and Neighbours, the Inhabitants of LAVENHAM.

My Dear Friends,

Solomon saith, *The desire of a man is his kindeneſſe, and a poor man is better than a lyar*, Prov. 19. 22. If you be of his mind, I dare promiſe theſe Notes, (which I here devote to your ſervice) a kind acceptance at your hands. You will finde me to be the *poor man*, by the mite I preſent you with; but the hearty deſire of your eternal happineſſe from which it comes, will (I hope) clear me from being *the lyar*. I never could be ſo ſerviceable to you, as many Miniſters are to their people, having been with you in much weakneſſe; and ſtill it is the good pleaſure of God, I ſhould be ſtaked down to a ſhort tedder of ſtrength and other abilities; I have reaſon therefore, (that I may, though not recompence that want, yet expreſſe my deep ſenſe thereof) to croud the more love into the little I can do for you. And truly my heart is enlarged to you, and to God for you. If any thing makes me loth to be gone into another world, (which my dropping houſe bids me above many prepare for) it is not the leaſt, to think I ſhall leave no more of you walking in the way to eternal life, and you who are on your way thither, in no cloſer Goſpel-order for your mutual help and comfort in your journey: yea, while I am among you, little do

you think how much of your poor Miniſters life lies at your mercy. If I ſhould meaſure my life by the joy of it, (as indeed who doth not?) then in ſome uprightneſſe I can ſay with *Paul*, I live as I ſee any of you ſtand faſt in the Lord, and die as I ſee others ſtand faſt in their ſins, not to be moved with all the entreaties of the Goſpel which have wooed you. And why (my dear friends) ſhould not the life of your ſouls be much more precious in your own ſight than mine? But I forbear, I would not willingly be thought, as ſome husbands are, to be kinder to you abroad before ſtrangers, than I am at home.

What I preſent you with in this Treatiſe, it's diſh from your own table, and ſo (I hope) will go down the better. You cannot deſpiſe it (though the fare be mean) except you will blame your ſelves who choſe the Cook. I cannot be earneſt with others, to beſtow ſo much time as to read over theſe plain Sermons, leſt it ſhould be to their loſſe; it were but to call them from gathering ſheaves in the more fruitful labours of others, to glean a few ears, and thoſe but thin alſo in mine; yet with you, my people, I may be a little bold. Phyſicians ſay, the mothers milk though not ſo weighty as anothers, if no noxious humour be taſted in it, becauſe natural, is more proper for the childe than a ſtrangers. And, I think, it would not be an errour, if I ſhould ſay it held in the milk which the Miniſter gives to his flock. A people conſciencioufly lying at the breaſts of their own Miniſter, (if the milk he gives be wholſome) may expect the bleſſing of God for their nouriſhment, though it has no ſo much luſciouſneſſe to pleaſe the curious taſter as ſome others. Well, whatever theſe Sermons were, ſome of thoſe few ſpirits which you found in hearing, will be miſſing in the reading of them. It is as eaſie to paint fire with the heat, as with pen and ink to com-

commit that to paper, which occurres in preaching. There is as much differeuce between a Sermon in the Pulpit, and printed in a book, as between milke in the warme breast, and in a sucking bottle; yet what it loseth in the lively taste, is recompenced by the convenience of it. The book may be at hand when the Preacher cannot; and truly, that's the chief end of printing, that as the bottle and spoon is used when the mother is sick or out of the way; so the book, to quiet the Christian and stay his stomach in the absence of the Ordinance. He that readeth Sermons and good books at home to save his pains of going to hear, is a thief to his soul in a religious habit: he consults for his ease, but not for his profit; he eats cold meat when he may have hot: He hazards the losing the benefit of both by contemning of one. If the Spouse could have had her beloved at home, she needed not to have coursed the streets and waited on the publick. O what need we offer sacriledge for sacrifice, rob God of one duty to pay him another? He hath laid our work in better order, one wheele would not interfere with another, if we did more regularly. A chief part of *Davids* Arithmetick of numbring our dayes, lies in that which we call division, as to cast the account of this our short life so, as to divide the little whole summe thereof into the several portions of time due for the performing of every duty in. An Instrument is not in tune, except it have all the strings; and those will not make good Musick, if the Musician hath not wisdome to cause every string to speak in its due time; The Christian is not in tune, except he takes in all the duties of his place and calling; neither will the performance of them be harmonious in Gods ear, if every one be not done in its proper season. O my friends, labour not only to do the duty of your place, but that duty in its own place also.

Hear

Hear when you should hear. Know your time for closet, and time for shop: and when your retiring houre comes, a few minutes now and then spent in taking a repetition of what formerly you heard, shall not (I hope) another day be reckoned with your lost time. The Subject of the Treatise is solemn, *A War between the Saint and Satan*, and that so bloody a one, that the cruellest which ever was fought by men, will be found but sport and childes play to this. Alas, what is the killing of bodies to destroying of souls? 'Tis a sad meditation indeed, to think how many thousands have been sent to the grave in a few late years among us by the sword of man; But far more astonishing to consider how many of those may be sent to hell by the sword of Gods wrath. 'Tis a spiritual war you shall read of, and that not a history of what was fought many ages past and is now over; but of what now is doing, the Tragedy is at present acting, and that not at the furthest end of the world, but what concernes thee and every one that reads it. The stage whereon this War is fought, is every mans own soul. Here is no Neuter in this War, the whole world is engaged in the quarrel, either for God against Satan, or for Satan against God. It was a great question some years past, 'Who are you for?' The not giving a good account to which, hath cost many a life. O my dear friends, think solemnly what answer you mean to give to God and conscience, when they in a dying houre shall ask every one of you, Who art thou for?' Tis an incomparable mercy, that you are yet where you may choose your side; It will not be ever so, may be not a day to an end. If once in another world, you must then stand to your colours, yet you may run from the Devils quarters, and be taken into Christs pay. The Drum beats in the Gospel for Voluntiers. O, the Lord make you wil-

willing in the day of his power. I know you all would be on the sureſt ſide. O what can you be ſure of, while under the devils Enſigne, but damnation? The curſe of God cleaves to him & all that takes part with him, O let not the little plunder and ſpoil of ſinful pleaſures and pelf, bewitch you ſtill to follow his Camp. What is that ſouldier better for his booty he gets in a fight, who before he can get off with it, is himſelf ſlain upon the place? (ſo many have been ſerved in theſe wars, if reports be true.) 'Tis that thou muſt certainly look for. The piece is charg'd, and aime taken at thy breaſt, which will be thy eternal death if thou perſiſteſt. Gods threatenings will go off at laſt, and then where art thou? where, but in hell, where thy wedge of gold and Babyloniſh garment, thy wages of unrighteouſneſſe will do thee little ſtead? O Neighbours, I am loth to leave you in the way where Gods bullets flie; but I muſt have a word for you, my Chriſtian friends, who have eſpouſed Chriſts quarrel, and are in the field againſt Satan. My heart is towards you, who have thus willingly offered your ſelves among the Lords people to his help againſt the mighty. He can deſtroy him without you, but he takes your love as kindly as if he could not. God hath ſent me (as *Jeſſe* did *David*) with this little preſent to you and the reſt of my Brethren that are in his Camp. May it be but to the ſtrengthening of your hearts and hands in fighting the Lords battels, and I ſhall bleſſe God that put it into my heart thus to viſit you. O hold on, dear friends, in your Chriſtian warfare, let none take the crown from you. *Whet your courage at the throne of grace*, from whence all your recruits of ſoul-ſtrength come. *Send faith oft up the hill of the Promiſe*, to ſee and bring you the certain newes of Chriſts coming to you, yea, for you, and aſſured victory with him. *Reade the exploits*, which Chriſts Worthyes by faith have done,

and in their Conqueſts reade your own, for in them *he ſpake with us*, as the Prophet of *Jacob*. *Be thankful* for every victory you get, and let not the houling wilderneſſe, yet before you, put the ſong of your praiſes for temptations paſt out of tune, yet rejoyce with trembling, as thoſe who are ſtill in your enemies countrie, and muſt keep by the ſword what you get by the ſword: *Be ſure you ſtand in cloſe order amongſt your ſelves*; Theſe times give us too many ſad examples of ſuch, who firſt fell from communion with their Brethren, and then into the devourers hand; ſtraglers are ſoon ſnap't; you will finde you are ſafeſt in a body. *Take heed of a private ſpirit*; let not only your particular ſafetie, but of the whole Army of Saints be in your eye and care, eſpecially that company in which you march, (Congregation I mean;) that ſouldier which can ſee an enemie in fight with his brethren, and not help them, he makes it but the more eaſie for the enemy to ſlay himſelf at laſt; Say not therefore, *Am I my brothers Keeper?* God would not keep him that cared not to keep his brother. Watch over one another, not to play the Criticks on your brothers failings, and triumph when he halts, but to help him up if he falls, or if poſſible, to keep him from falling by a timely reſcue, as *Abiſhai* came to *Davids* ſuccour. *Keep your rank and file.* We ſee what advantage Satan hath got in theſe looſe times, ſince we have learn't to fight him out of order, and the private ſouldier (Chriſtian I mean) hath taken the officers work out of his hands. *Harden your ſelves againſt the ſcandals, which the cowardize and treachery of falſe brethren hath given you.* He is the right ſouldier that is not diſcouraged by thoſe that run from, or that are ſlain in the battel; but ſtill preſſeth on to victory, though he goes to it over the backs of others that are killed upon the place. In a word, *Diſintangle your hearts what you can from the love of, and diſtracting*

cares

cares for this present world. No man that warreth intangleth himself with the affaires of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a souldier, 2 Tim. 2. 4. If it behoves any to have their Will ready made, and their worldly interests set at home stay, then surely the souldier: if any souldier, than the Christian. Get but once your hearts mortified to the world, and care rolled upon God, for name, estate, and relations here, and then you are fit to march wherever Christ will lead you. The want of this hath made many run home to save their own private stake there, when they should have been in the field for Christ. And now, my Christian friends, march on, not in the confidence of your Armour, but in the power of his might, who hath promised shortly to subdue Satan under your feet. I have done, only I must crave pardon of you, for rending this part of the Treatise from the other, which neither my little strength or leisure would suffer me to grasp at once. 2 Tim. 2. 4.

But this having first put forth its hand in preaching, can make no great breach upon that, though it get the start a little in printing. Let me therefore, dear friends, (if God shall make this imperfect birth any way serviceable to your faith,) humbly desire, that you would as continue to strive at the throne of grace for a blessing on my poor Ministery among you, so also lift up a prayer, that strength my be given, to bring forth what of this yet is undeliver'd. I do not send you thither where I intend not to meet you, but shall desire grace to be found faithful in striving with you, and for you, that amongst those who finde any spiritual advantage from my weak labours, you to whom they are chiefly devoted may not receive the least.

Lavenham, *Jan.* 1. 1655.

So prayeth your affectionate, though unworthy Minister,

WILLIAM GURNALL.

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THE

A

TREATISE

Of the whole

Armour of God

THE INTRODUCTION.

EPHESIANS 6. 10.

Finally, my Brethren, be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

PAul was now in bonds, yet not ſo cloſe kept as to be denied pen and paper: God (it ſeems) gave him ſome favour in the ſight of his enemies: *Paul* was *Nero*'s priſoner; *Nero* was much more Gods. And while God had work for *Paul*, he found him friends both in Court and Priſon. Let perſecutors ſend the Saints to priſon, God can provide a Keeper for their turn.

But how doth this great Apoſtle ſpend his time in priſon? not in publiſhing invectives againſt thoſe, (though the worſt of men) who had laid him in; a piece of zeal which the holy ſufferers of thoſe times were little acquainted with: Nor in politick counſels how he might winde himſelf out of his trouble, by ſordid flattery of, or ſinful compliance with the great ones of the times.

Some would have uſed any pick-lock to have opened a paſſage to their liberty, and not ſcrupled, (ſo eſcape they might) whether they got out at the door or window: But this holy man was not ſo fond of liberty or life, as to purchaſe them with the leaſt hazard to the Goſpel. He knew too much of another world, to bid ſo high for the enjoying of this, and therefore he is at a point what his enemies can do with him, well knowing he could go to heaven whether they would or no; No, the great care which lay upon him was for the Churches of Chriſt: as a faithful Steward he labours to ſet this Houſe of God in order before his departure. We read of no diſpatches ſent to Court to procure his liberty, but many to the Churches to help them to ſtand faſt in the liberty wherewith Chriſt had made them free. There is no ſuch way to be even with the devil and his inſtruments for all their ſpite againſt us, as by doing what good we can, wherever we become. The devil had as good have let *Paul* alone; for he no ſooner comes into priſon, but he falls a preaching, at which the gates of Satans priſon fly open, and poor ſinners come forth. Happy for *Oneſimus* that *Paul* was ſent to Jaile; God had an errand for *Paul* to do to him and others, which the devil never dream't of. Nay, he doth not only preach in priſon, but that he may do the devil all the miſchief he can, he ſends his Epiſtles to the Churches; that taſting his Spirit in his afflictions, and reading his faith, now ready to be offered up, they might much more be confirmed, amongſt which *Epheſus* was not leaſt in his thoughts, as you may perceive by his abode with them two years together, *Acts* 19. 10. as alſo by his ſending for the Elders of this Church as farre as *Miletus*, in his laſt journey to *Jeruſalem*, *Acts* 20. 17. to take his farewel of them, as never to ſee their face in this world more. And ſurely the ſad impreſſion which that heart-breaking departure left upon the ſpirits of theſe Elders, yea, the whole Church, (by them acquainted with this mournful newes,) might ſtir up *Paul*, now in priſon, to write unto this Church, that having ſo much of his Spirit, yea, of the Spirit of the Goſpel left in their hands to converſe with, they might more patiently take the newes of his death.

In the former part of this Epiſtle, he ſoares high in the myſteries of faith. In the latter, according to his uſual method, he

he deſcends to Application; where we finde him contracting all thoſe truths, as beams together in a powerful exhortation, the more to enkindle their hearts, and powerfully perſwade them to *walk worthy of their vocation*, *chap.* 4. 1. which then is done, when the Chriſtians life is tranſparent, that the grace of the Goſpel ſhines forth in the power of holineſſe on every ſide, and from all his relations, as a candle in a Chryſtal glaſſe, not in a dark Lanthorn, lightſome one way, and dark another: and therefore he runs over the ſeveral relations of *Husband*, *Wife*, *Parents*, *Children*, *Maſter* and *Servants*, and preſſeth the ſame in all theſe.

Now having ſet every one in his proper place, about his particular duty: as a wiſe General after he hath ranged his Army, and drawn them forth into rank and file: he makes this following ſpeech at the head of this *Epheſian* Camp, all in martial phraſe, as beſt ſuiting the Chriſtians calling, which is a continued warfare with the world, and the Prince of the world. The ſpeech it ſelf contains two parts;

Firſt, a ſhort, but ſweet and powerful encouragement, *ver.* 10.

Secondly, the other part is ſpent in ſeveral directions, for their managing this war the more ſuccesfully, with ſome motives here and there ſprinkled among them. To begin with the firſt.

1. The word of encouragement to battel. With this he begins his ſpeech; *Finally*, *my brethren*, *be ſtrong in the Lord*: the beſt way indeed to prepare them for the following directions. A ſoul deeply poſſeſt with fear, and diſſpirited with ſtrong impreſſions of danger, is in no poſture for counſel. As we ſee in an Army when put to the run with ſome ſudden alarm, and apprehenſions of danger; 'tis hard rallying them into order while the ſcare and feare is over; therefore the Apoſtle firſt raiſeth up their ſpirits, *Be ſtrong in the Lord*: as if he ſhould ſay, perhaps ſome drooping ſoules finde their hearts faile them, while they ſee their enemies ſo ſtrong, and they ſo weak; ſo numerous, and they ſo few; ſo well appointed, and they ſo naked and unarmed; ſo skilful and expert at armes, but they green and raw ſouldiers; Let not theſe or any other thoughts diſmay you, but with undanted courage march on, and *be ſtrong in the Lord*; on whoſe performance lies the ſtreſſe of the battel, and not on your

skill or strength: It is not the least of a Ministers care, and skill in dividing the Word, so to presse the Christians duty, as not to oppresse his Spirit with the weight of it, by laying it on the creatures own shoulders, and not on the Lords strength, as here our Apostle teacheth us.

1. In this verse; First, here is a familiar Compellation; *My brethren.*

2. Secondly, here is the exhortation; *Be strong.*

3. Thirdly, here is a cautionary direction annexed to the exhortation; *In the Lord.*

4. Fourthly, here is an encouraging amplification of the direction; *And in the power of his might*, or in his mighty power.

CHAP. I.

Of Christian Courage and Resolution, wherefore necessary, and how obtained.

WE shall wave the Compellation, and begin with the Exhortation: *Be strong*, that is, be of good courage, so commonly used in Scripture-phrase; 2 *Chron.* 32. 7. *Be strong and couragious.* So, *Isa.* 35. 4. *Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong:* or, unite all the powers of your soules, and muster up your whole force, you will have use of all you can make or get. From whence the Point is this.

Doct. The Christian of all men needs courage and resolution. Indeed there is nothing he doth as a Christian, or can do, but is an act of valour: A cowardly spirit is beneath the lowest duty of a Christian: *Josh.* 1. 7. *Be thou strong and very couragious, that thou mayest*: what? stand in battel against those warlike Nations? No, *But that thou mayest observe to do according to all the Law, which Moses my servant commanded thee.* It requires more prowesse and greatnesse of spirit to obey God faithfully, than to command an Army of men, to be a Christian than to be a Captain. What seems lesse, than for a Christian to pray? yet this cannot be performed aright, without a Princely Spirit; As *Jacob* is said to behave himself like a *Prince*, when he did but pray: for which

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he came out of the field Gods Bannarite. Indeed if you call that prayer, which a carnal person performes, nothing more poor and dastard-like. Such a one is as great a stranger to this enterprise, as the craven souldier is to the exploits of a valiant Chieftain. The Christian in prayer comes up close to God, with an humble boldnesse of faith, and takes hold of him, wrestles with him, yea, will not let him go without a blessing, and all this in the face of his own sins, and divine justice, which let fly upon him from the fiery mouth of the Law; while the others boldness in prayer is but the childe, either of ignorance in his minde, or hardnesse in his heart; whereby not feeling his sinnes, and not knowing his danger, he rushes upon duty with a blinde confidence, which soon quails, when conscience awakes and gives him the alarum, that his sinnes are upon him, as the *Philistines* on *Sampson*; alas, then in a fright the poor-spirited wretch throwes down his weapon, flies the presence of God with guilty *Adam*, and dares not look him on the face. Indeed there is no duty in a Christians whole course of walking with God, or acting for God, but is lined with many difficulties, which shoot like enemies through the hedges at the Christian, whilest he is marching toward Heaven: so that he is put to dispute every inch of ground as he goes. They are only a few noble spirited soules, (who dare take Heaven by force) that are fit for this calling. For the further proof of this Point, see some few pieces of service that every Christian engageth in.

First, the Christian is to proclaime and prosecute an irreconcileable war against his bosome-sins; those sins which have layen neerest his heart, must now be trampled under his feet: So *David*, *I have kept my self from my iniquity*; Now what courage and resolution doth this require? you think *Abraham* was tried to purpose, when called to take his *son*, *his son Isaac*, *his only son whom he loved*, and offer him up with his own hands, and no other, yet what was that to this? Soul, take thy lust, thy only lust, which is the childe of thy deerest love, thy *Isaac*, the sin which hath caused most joy and laughter; from which thou hast promised thy self the greatest returne of pleasure or profit: as ever thou lookest to see my face with comfort, lay hands on it, and offer it up: poure out the blood of it before me, runne the sacrificing knife of mortification into the very heart of it, Gen. 22. 1.

and this freely, joyfully, (for it is no pleaſing ſacrifice that is offered with a countenance caſt down,) and all this now, before thou haſt one embrace more from it. Truly this is a hard chapter, fleſh and blood cannot bear this ſaying; our luſt will not lie ſo patiently on the Altar, as *Iſaac*, or as a *Lambe that is brought to the ſlaughter, which is dumb*, but will roar and ſhreek, yea, even ſhake and rend the heart with their hideous out-cryes. Who is able to expreſſe the conflicts, the wreſtlings, the convulſions of Spirit the Chriſtian feels, before he can bring his heart to this work? or who can fully ſet forth the Art, the Rhetorical inſinuations, which ſuch a luſt will plead with for its life? one while Satan will extenuate and mince the matter, It is but a little one, O ſpare it, and thy ſoul ſhall live for all that: Another while he flatters the ſoul with the ſecrecy of it, Thou mayeſt keep me and thy credit alſo; I will not be ſeen abroad in thy company to ſhame thee among thy neighbours; ſhut me up in the moſt retired room thou haſt in thy heart, from the hearing of others (if thou wilt,) only let me now and then have the wanton embraces of thy thoughts and affections in ſecret; if that cannot be granted, then Satan will ſeem only to deſire execution may be ſtayed a while, as *Jephta*'s daughter of her father; *Let me alone a month or two, and then do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth*: well knowing few ſuch reprieved luſts, but at laſt obtaine their full pardon; yea, recover their favour with the ſoul. Now what reſolution doth it require to break through ſuch violence and importunity, and notwithſtanding all this, to do preſent execution? Here the valiant Swordmen of the world, have ſhewed themſelves meer cowards, who have come out of the field with victorious banners, and then lived, yea, died ſlaves to a baſe luſt at home. As one could ſay of a great Romane Captain, (who as he rode in his triumphant Chariot through *Rome*, had his eye never off a Courtizan that walk't along the ſtreet) Behold, how this goodly Captain that conquered ſuch potent Armies, is himſelf conquered by one ſilly woman.

Judg. 17. v. 2. 37.

2. Secondly, the Chriſtian is to walk ſingularly, not after the worlds guiſe. *Rom.* 12. 2. we are commanded not to be conformed to this world, that is, not to accommodate our ſelves to the corrupt cuſtomes of the world. The Chriſtian muſt not be

be of ſuch a complying nature, to cut the coat of his Profeſſion according to the faſhion of the times, or the humour of the company he falls into, like that Courtier, who being ask't how he could keep his preferment in ſuch changing times, which one while had a Prince for Popery, another while againſt Popery? anſwered, he was *E ſalice, non ex quercu ortus*: he was not a ſtubborn oake, but bending oſier, that could yield to the winde: No, the Chriſtian muſt ſtand fixt to his principles, and not change his habit, but freely ſhew what Country-man he is by his holy conſtancy in the truth. Now, what an *odium*, what ſnares, what dangers doth this ſingularity expoſe the Chriſtian to? Some will hoot and mock him, as one in a *Spaniſh* faſhion would be laugh't at in your ſtreets. Thus *Michal* ſlouted *David*. Indeed the world counts the Chriſtian for his ſingularity of life the only foole; which I have thought gave the firſt occaſion to that nick-name, whereby men commonly expreſſe a ſilly man or a foole: Such a one (ſay they) is a meer *Abraham*, that is, in the worlds account a foole. But why an *Abraham*? becauſe *Abraham* did that which carnal reaſon (the worlds Idol) laughs at as meere folly; he left a preſent eſtate in his fathers houſe, to go he knew not whither, to receive an inheritance he knew not when. And truly ſuch fooles all the Saints are branded for, by the wiſe world. *Iou know the man and his communication*, ſaid *Jehu* to his companions, asking what that mad fellow came for, who was no other than a Prophet, 2 *Kings* 9. 11. Now this requires courage to deſpiſe the ſhame, which the Chriſtian muſt expect to meet withal for his ſingularity. Shame is that which proud nature moſt diſdaines, to avoid which many durſt not *confeſſe Chriſt openly*; many loſe heaven, becauſe they are aſhamed to go in a fooles coat thither. Again, as ſome will mock, ſo others will perſecute to death, meerly for this non-conformity in the Chriſtians principles and practices to them. This was the trap laid for the three children; they muſt dance after *Nebuchadnezzars* pipe, or burne. This was the plot laid to enſnare *Daniel*, who walk't ſo unblameably, that his very enemies gave him this teſtimony, that he had no fault, but his ſingularity in his Religion, *Dan.* 6. 5. 'Tis a great honour to a Chriſtian, yea, to Religion it ſelfe, when all their enemies can ſay, is, they are preciſe, and will not do as we do. Now in ſuch a caſe as this, when the Chriſtian muſt Joh. 7. 13.

must turn or burne; leave praying, or become a prey to the cruel teeth of bloody men; how many politick retreats, and self-preserving distinctions would a cowardly unresolved heart invent? The Christian, that hath so great opposition had need be well lock'd into the saddle of his Profession, or else he will be soon dismounted.

3. Thirdly, the Christian must keep on his way to heaven in the midst of all the scandals that are cast upon the wayes of God, by the Apostasie and foul falls of false Professors. There were ever such in the Church, who by their sad miscarriages in judgment and practice, have laid a stone of offence in the way of Profession, at which weak Christians are ready to make a stand, (as 2 Sam. 2. 22. they at the bloody body of *Asahel,*) not knowing whether they may venture any further in their Profession. Seeing such (whose gifts they so much admired) lie before them, wallowing in the blood of their slain Profession: of zealous Professors to prove, perhaps, fiery persecutors; of strict Performers of religious duties, irreligious Atheists: no more like the men they were some yeares past, than the vale of *Sodom*, (now a bog and quagmire) is, to what it was, when for fruitfulnesse compared to the garden of the Lord. We had need have a holy resolution to bear up against such discouragements, and not to faint: as *Joshuah*, who lived to see the whole Camp of *Israel* (a very few excepted) revolting, and in their hearts turning back to *Egypt*, and yet with an undanted Spirit maintained his integrity, yea, resolved though not a man beside would bear him company, yet he would serve the Lord.

4. Fourthly, the Christian must trust in a withdrawing God, *Isa.* 50. *v.* 10. *Let him that walks in darknesse, and sees no light, trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.* This requires a holy boldnesse of faith indeed to venture into Gods presence, as *Esther* into *Ahashuerus*, when no smile is to be seen on his face, no golden sceptre of the promise perceived by the soul, as held forth to embolden it to come near, than to presse in with this noble resolution; *If I perish, I perish.* Nay more, to trust not Job 13. 15. only in a withdrawing, but a *killing God*; not when his love is hid, but when his wrath breaks forth: Now for a soul to make its approaches to God by a recumbency of faith, while God seemes to fire upon it, and shoot his frownes like envenomed arrowes into

into it. This is hard work, and will trye the Chriſtians mettal to purpoſe. Yet ſuch a maſculine ſpirit we finde in that poor woman of *Canaan*, who takes up the bullets Chriſt ſhot at her; and with an humble boldneſſe of faith ſends them back again in her prayer.

Fifthly, the believer is to perſevere in his Chriſtian courſe to the end of his life, his work and his life muſt go off the ſtage together. This addes weight to every other difficulty of the Chriſtians calling: We have known many who have gone into the field, and liked the work of a ſouldier for a battel or two, but ſoon have had enough, and come running home again, but few can bear it as a conſtant trade. Many are ſoon engaged in holy duties, eaſily perſwaded to take up a profeſſion of Religion, and as eaſily perſwaded to lay it down; like the new Moon, which ſhines a little in the firſt part of the night, but is down before half the night be gone; lightſome Profeſſors in their youth, whoſe old age is wrapt up in thick darkneſſe of ſin and wickedneſſe; O this perſevering is a hard word! this taking up the croſſe daily, this praying alwayes, this watching night and day, and never laying aſide our clothes and armour, I mean indulging our ſelves to remit and unbend in our holy waiting on God, and walking with God; this ſends many ſorrowful away from Chriſt, yet this is the Saints duty, to make Religion his every day work, without any vacation from one end of the year to the other. Theſe few inſtances are enough to ſhew what need the Chriſtian hath of reſolution. The application followes. 5.

This gives us then a reaſon why there are ſo many Profeſſors, and ſo few Chriſtians indeed; ſo many that run, and ſo few obtain; ſo many go into the field againſt Satan, and ſo few come out Conquerors; becauſe all have a deſire to be happy, but few have courage and reſolution to grapple with the difficulties, that meet them in the way to their happineſſe. All *Iſrael* came joyfully out of *Egypt* under *Moſes* his conduct, yea, and a *mixed multitude* with them, but when their bellies were a little pinched with hunger, and their greedy deſires of a preſent *Canaan* deferred, yea, inſtead of peace and plenty, war and penury, they (like white-liver'd ſouldiers) are ready to flie from their colours, and make a diſhonourable retreat into *Egypt*. Thus the great- *Uſe* 1.

est part of those who professe the Gospel, when they come to push of pike, to be tried what they will do, deny, endure for Christ, grow sick of their enterprise: alas, their hearts fail them, they like the waters of *Bethlehem*; but if they must dispute their passage with so many enemies, they will even content themselves with their own Cistern, and leave heaven to others that will venture more for it. O how many part with Christ at this crosse-way! like *Orpah* they go a furlong or two with Christ, while he goes to take them off from their worldly hopes, and bids them prepare for hardship, and then they fairely kisse and leave him, loath indeed to lose heaven, but more loath to buy it at so dear a rate. Like some green heads, that childishly make choice of some sweet trade (such as is the Confectioners) from a liquorish tooth they have to the junkets it affords, but meeting with soure sauce of labour and toile that goes with them, they give in, and are weary of their service; the sweet bait of Religion hath drawn many to nibble at it, who are offended with the hard service it calls to; It requires another spirit than the world can give or receive to follow Christ fully.

Use 2. Let this then exhort you, Christians, to labour for this holy resolution and proweſſe, which is so needful for your Christian Profession, that without it you cannot be what you profesſe. *The fearful* are in the forelorne of those that march for hell, *Rev.* 21. the violent and valiant are they, which take heaven by force: Cowards never wan heaven. Say not, thou hast royal blood runing in thy veins, and art begotten of God, except thou canst prove thy pedigree by this heroick spirit, to dare to be holy in spite of men and devils. The Eagle tries her young ones by the Sun, Christ tries his children by their courage, that dare look on the face of death and danger for his sake, *Mark* 8. 34, 35. O how uncomely a sight is it; a bold sinner and a fearful Saint; one resolved to be wicked, and a Christian wavering in his holy course; to see guilt put innocency to flight, and hell keep the field, impudently braving it with displayed banners of open profanenesse; and Saints to hide their colours for shame, or run from them for feare, who should rather wrap themselves in them, and die upon the place, than thus betray the glorious Name of God, which is called upon by them to the scorne of the uncircumcised. Take heart therefore, O ye Saints, and be strong:

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your cause is good, God himself espouseth your quarrel, who hath appointed you his own Son, General of the field, called *The Captain of our salvation.* He shall lead you on with courage, and bring you off with honour. He lived and died for you, he will live and die with you: for mercy and tenderness to his souldiers, none like him. *Trajan*, 'tis said, rent his clothes to binde up his souldiers wounds; Christ poured out his blood as balm to heal his Saints wounds, teares of his flesh to binde them up. For prowesse, none to compare with him: he never turn'd his head from danger: no, not when hells malice and heavens justice appeared in field against him; *Knowing all that should come upon him, went forth and said, Whom seek ye?* John 18. 4. For success insuperable; he never lost battel even when he lost his life: he wan the field, carrying the spoiles thereof in the triumphant Chariot of his Ascension to heaven with him: where he makes an open shew of them to the unspeakable joy of Saints and Angels. You march in the midst of gallant spirits, your fellow-souldiers, every one the Son of a Prince: Behold, some (enduring with you here below a great fight of afflictions and temptations,) take heaven by storme and force: Others you may see after many assaults, repulses and rallyings of their faith and patience, got upon the walls of heaven Conquerors; from whence they do, as it were look down, and call you their fellow-brethren on earth, to march up the hill after them, crying aloud, Fall on, and the City is your own, as now it is ours; who for a few dayes conflict, are now crowned with heavens glory, one moments enjoyment of which hath dried up all our teares, healed all our wounds, and made us forget the sharpnesse of the fight, with the joy of our present victory. In a word, Christians, God and Angels are Spectatours, observing how you quit your selves like children of the most High; every exploit your faith doth against sinne and Satan, causeth a shout in heaven; while you valiantly prostrate this temptation, scale that difficulty, regain the other ground you even now lost, out of your enemies hands. Your deare Saviour, (who stands by with a reserve for your relief at a pinch) his very heart leaps within him for joy, to see the proof of your love to him, and zeal for him in all your combates; and will not forget all the faithful service you have done in his wars on earth: but when thou comest out Heb. 2.

of the field, will receive thee with the like joy, as he was entertained himſelf at his return to heaven of his Father. Now, Chriſtian, if thou meaneſt thus couragiouſly to bear up againſt all oppoſition, in thy march to heaven, as thou ſhouldeſt do well, to raiſe thy ſpirit with ſuch generous and ſoul-ennobling thoughts, ſo in an eſpecial manner look thy principles be well fixt, or elſe thy heart will be unſtable, and an unſtable heart is weak as water, it cannot excell in courage. Two things are required to fix our principles.

1. Firſt, an eſtabliſhed judgment in the truth of God. He that knows not well what or whom he fights for, may ſoon be perſwaded to change his ſide, or at leaſt ſtand Neuter: ſuch may be found that go for Profeſſours, that can hardly give an account what they hope for, or whom they hope in; yet Chriſtians they muſt be thought, though they runne before they know their errand: or if they have ſome principles they go upon, they are ſo unſetled, that every winde blowes them down, like looſe tyles from the houſe top. Blinde zeal is ſoon put to a ſhameful retreat, while holy reſolution, built on faſt principles, lifts up its head, like a rock in the midſt of the waves. *Thoſe that know their God, ſhall be ſtrong, and do exploits*, *Dan.* 11. 32. The Angel told *Daniel* who were the men that would ſtand to their tackling, and bear up for God in that houre, both of temptation and perſecution, which ſhould be brought upon them by *Antiochus*; not all the Jewes, ſome of them ſhould be *corrupt* baſely *by flatteries*, others ſcared by threats out of their Profeſſion, only a few of fixed principles, who knew their God whom they ſerved, and were grounded in their Religion, theſe ſhould be ſtrong, and do exploits, that is, to flatteries they ſhould be incorruptible, and to power and force unconquerable.

2. Secondly, a ſincere aime at the right end in our Profeſſion. Let a man be never ſo knowing in the things of Chriſt, if his aime be not right in his Profeſſion, that mans principles will hang looſe, he'll not venture much or far for Chriſt, no more, no further than he can ſave his own ſtake. A hypocrite may ſhew ſome mettal at hand, ſome courage for a ſpurt in conquering ſome difficulties, but he'll ſhew himſelf a jade at length. He that hath a falſe end in his Profeſſion, will ſoon come to an end of his Profeſſion, when he is pinch't on that toe where his corn is:

is: I meane, called to deny that his naughty heart aimed at all this while, now his heart failes him, he can go no further. O take heed of this ſquint eye to our profit, pleaſure, honour or any thing beneath Chriſt and heaven; for they will take away your heart, as the Prophet ſaith *of wine and women*, that is, our love, and if our love be taken away, there will be little courage left for Chriſt. How couragious was *Jehu* at firſt, and he tells the world it is zeal for God: but why doth his heart faile him then, before half his work be done? his heart was never right ſet, that very thing that ſtirr'd up his zeal at firſt, at laſt quench't and co v'd it, and that was his ambition; his deſire of a Kingdom made him zealous againſt *Ahab*'s houſe, to cut off them (who might in time juſtle him beſides the throne) which done, and he quietly ſetled, he dare not go through-ſtitch with Gods work, leſt he ſhould loſe what he got by provoking the people with a thorough reformation. Like ſome ſouldiers, when once they meet with a rich booty at the ſacking of ſome Town, are ſpoil'd for fighting ever after.

CHAP. II.

Of the Saints ſtrength, where it lies, and wherefore laid up in God.

THe ſecond Branch of the words followeth, which contains a cautionary direction. Having exhorted the Saints at *Epheſus*, and in them all believers to a holy reſolution and courage in their warfare; leſt this ſhould be miſtaken, and beget in them an opinion of their own ſtrength for the battel, the Apoſtle leads them out of themſelves for this ſtrength, even to the Lord; *Be ſtrong in the Lord.* From whence obſerve.

That the Chriſtians ſtrength lies in the Lord, not in himſelfe. *Doct.*
The ſtrength of the General in other hoſtes lies in his troops; he flyes, as a great Commander once ſaid to his ſouldiers, upon their wings; if their feathers be clip't, their power broken, he is loſt; but in the Army of Saints, the ſtrength of every Saint, yea, of the whole hoſte of Saints lies in the Lord of hoſtes. So I can

overcome his enemies without their hands, but they cannot so much as defend themselves without his arme. It is one of Gods names, *The strength of Israel*, 1 *Sam.* 15.29. He was the strength of *Davids* heart, without him this valiant Worthy (that could, when held up in his armes, defie him that defied an whole Army) behaves himself strangely for feare, at a word or two that drop't from the *Philistines* mouth. He was the strength of his hands, *He taught his fingers to fight*, and so he is the strength of all his Saints in their war against sin and Satan. Some propound a question, whether there be a sin committed in the world, in which Satan hath not a part? but if the question were, whether there be any holy action performed without the special assistance of God concurring? that is resolved, *John* 15. 5. *Without me you can do nothing.* Thinking strength of God, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. *Not that we are sufficient of our selves, to think any thing as of our selves, but our sufficiency is of God.* We Apostles, we Saints that have habitual grace, yet this lies like water at the bottome of a Well, which will not ascend with all our pumping, till God poure in his exciting grace, and then it comes. To will is more than to think, to exert our will into action, more than both; these are of God, *Phil.*2.13. *It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure.* He makes the heart new, and having made it fit for heavenly motion, setting every wheele (as it were) in its right place, then he windes it up by his actuating grace, and sets it on going, the thoughts to stir, the will to move, and make towards the holy object presented; yet here the chariot is set, and cannot ascend the hill of action, till God puts his shoulder to the wheele, *Rom.* 7. *To will is present with me, but how to performe that which is good I finde not.* God is at the bottome of the ladder, and at the top also, the Authour and Finisher, yea, helping and lifting the soule at every round, in his ascent to any holy action. Well, now the Christian is set on work, how long will he keep close to it? Alas, poor soul, no longer than he is held up by the same hand, that impowered him at first. He hath soon wrought out the strength received, and therefore to maintaine the tenure of a holy course, there must be renewing strength from heaven every moment, which *David* knew, and therefore when his heart was in as holy a frame as ever he felt it, and his people by their free-will-offering declared the

the ſame: yet even then he prayes, that God would *keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of his people, and eſtabliſh their hearts to him*, 1 *Chron.*29.18. He adored the mercy that made them willing, and then he implores his further grace to ſtrengthen them, and tye a knot, that theſe precious pearles newly ſtrung on their hearts, might not ſlip off. The Chriſtian, when fulleſt of divine communications, is but a glaſſe without a foot, he cannot ſtand, or hold what he hath received any longer, then God holds him in his ſtrong hand. Therefore Chriſt, when bound for heaven, and ready to take his leave of his children, beſpeaks his Fathers care of them in his abſence; *Father, keep them*; as if he had ſaid, they muſt not be left alone, John 17. they are poor ſhiftleſſe children, that can neither ſtand nor go without help; they will loſe the grace I have given them, and fall into thoſe temptations which I kept them from while I was with them, if they be out of thy eye or armes but one moment; and therefore, *Father, keep them.*

Again, Conſider the Chriſtian, as addreſſing himſelf to any duty of Gods worſhip, ſtill his ſtrength is in the Lord; Would he pray? where will he finde materials for his prayer? alas, *he knowes not what to pray for, as he ought.* Let him alone, and he will Rom. 8. ſoon pray himſelf into ſome temptation or other, and cry for that which were cruelty in God to give; and therefore God puts words in our mouthes; *Take words with you and ſay*, Hoſea 14. 2. Well now he hath words put into his mouth; alas, they will freeze in his very lips, if he hath not ſome heart-heating affections to thaw the tap: and where ſhall this fire be had? not a ſpark to be found on his own hearth; except it be ſome ſtrange fire of natural deſires, which will not ſerve: whence then muſt the fire come to thaw the iceneſſe of the heart, but from heaven? The Spirit, he muſt ſtretch himſelf upon the ſoul, (as the Prophet on the childe) and then the ſoul will come to ſome kindly warmth, and heavenly heat in his affections; the Spirit muſt groan, and then the ſoul will groane, he helps us to theſe ſighs and groans, which turne the ſailes of prayer. He diſſolves the heart, and then it burſts out of the heart by groanes, of the lips by heavenly Rhetorick, out of the eyes as from a floodgate with teares: yet further now the creature is enabled to wreſtle with God in prayer; what will he get by all this? ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe he be weak in grace, is he able to pray himſelfe ſtrong, or corruption weak? no, this is not to be found in prayer, as an act of the creature: this drops from heaven alſo. *In the day*
Pſal. 138. 2. *that I cried, thou anſweredſt me, and gaveſt me ſtrength in my ſoul.* *David* received it in duty, but had it not from his duty, but from his God. He did not pray himſelf ſtrong, but God ſtrengthened him in his prayer. Well, caſt your eye once more upon the Chriſtian, as engaging in another Ordinance of hearing the Word preach't. The ſoules ſtrength to heare the Word
Acts 16. 14. is from God, *he opens the heart to attend*, yea, he opens the underſtanding of the Saint to receive the Word, ſo as to conceive what it meant. It is like *Sampſons* riddle which we cannot unfold without his Heifer: He opens the wombe of the ſoul to conceive by it, as the underſtanding to conceive of it, that the barren ſoul becomes a *joyful mother of children*. *David* ſate for half a year under the publick Lectures of the Law, and the wombe of his heart ſhut up, till *Nathan* comes and God with him, and now is the time of life, he conceives preſently, yea, and brings forth in the ſame day, falls preſently into the bitter pangs of ſorrow for his ſins, which went not over till he had caſt them forth in that ſweet *Pſalm* 51. Why ſhould this one word work more, than all the former, but that God now ſtruck in with his Word, which he did not before? He is therefore ſaid to *teach*
Iſa. 48. 17. *his people to profit*; he ſits in heaven that teacheth hearts. When Gods Spirit (who is the Head-maſter) ſhall call a ſoul from his Uſher to himſelfe, and ſay, Soul, you have not gone the way to thrive by hearing the Word, thus, and thus conceive of ſuch a truth, improve ſuch a promiſe, preſently the eyes of his underſtanding open, and his heart burnes within him, while he ſpeaks to him. Thus you ſee the truth of this Point, That the Chriſtians ſtrength is in the Lord. Now we ſhall give ſome demonſtrations.

SECT. 1.

Reaſ. 1. The firſt Reaſon may be taken from the nature of the Saints and their grace, both are creatures, they and their grace alſo: now *Ineſſe eſt de eſſe creaturæ*. 'Tis in the very nature of the creature,

ture, to depend on God its Maker, both for being and operation. Can you conceive an accident to be out of its subject, whitenesse out of the wall, or some other subject? 'tis as impossible that the creature should be, or act without strength from God: This, to be, act in and of himself, is so incommunicable a property of the Deity, that he cannot impart it to his creature: *God is, and there is none besides him*: when God made the world, it is said indeed he ended his work, that is, of Creation: he made no new *species* and kindes of creatures more; but to this day he hath not ended his work of Providence; *Hitherto my Father worketh*, saith Christ, *John* 5. 17. that is, in preserving and empowering what he hath made with strength to be and act, and therefore he is said to *hold our soules in life*. Workes of Art, which man makes, when finish't may stand some time without the Workmans help, as the house, when the Carpenter that made it is dead; but Gods works both of nature and grace are never off his hand, and therefore as the Father is said to work hitherto for the preservation of the works of nature, so the Son, to whom is committed the work of Redemption, he tells us *he worketh* also. Neither ended he his work, when he rose again, any otherwayes than his Father did in the work of Creation. God made an end of making, so Christ made an end of purchasing mercy, grace and glory for believers by once dying; and as God rested at the end of the Creation, so he, when he had wrought eternal Redemption, and *by himself purged our sins, sate down on the right hand of the Majesty on High*, Heb. 1. 3. But he ceaseth not to work by his intercession with God for us, and by his Spirit in us for God, whereby he upholds his Saints, their graces, and comforts in life, without which they would runne to ruine. Thus we see as grace is a creature, the Christian depends on God for his strength. But further,

2. Secondly, the Christians grace is not onely a creature, but a weak creature, conflicting with enemies stronger than it self, and therefore cannot keep the field without an auxiliary strength from Heaven. The weakest goes to the wall, if no succour comes in. Grace in this life is but weak, like a King in the Cradle, which gives advantage to Satan to carry on his plots more strongly, to the disturbance of this young Kings reigne in the soul, yea, he would soon make an end of the war in the ruine

of the beleevers grace, did not heaven take the Christian into protection. 'Tis true indeed, grace where ever it is, hath a principle in it selfe, that makes it desire and endeavour to preserve it selfe according to its strength, but being over-powered must perish, except assisted by God, as fire in green wood, (which deads and damps the part kindled) will in time go out except blown up, or more fire put to that little; so will grace in the heart. God brings his grace into the heart by Conquest: now as in a conquered City, though some yield and become true subjects to the Conquerour; yet others plot how they may shake off this yoke; and therefore it requires the same power to keep, as was to win it at first. The Christian hath an unregenerate part, that is discontented at this new change in the heart, and disdains as much to come under the sweet government of Christs Scepter, as the *Sodomites* that *Lot* should judge them. What, this fellow, a *Stranger*, controule us? And Satan heads this mutinous rout against the Christian: so that if God should not continually re-inforce this his new-planted Colony in the heart, the very natives (I mean corruptions) that are left, would come out of their dens and holes where they lye lurking, and eat up the little grace the holiest on earth hath, it would be as bread to these devourers.

3. A third demonstration may be taken from the grand designe, which God propounds to himselfe in the Saints salvation; yea, in the transaction of it from first to last: And that is twofold.

1. First, God would bring his Saints to heaven in such a way, as might be most expressive of his deare love and mercy to them.

2. Secondly, he would so expresse his mercy and love to them, as might rebound back to him, in the highest advance of his own glory possible: Now how becoming this is to both, that Saints should have all their ability for every step they take in the way to heaven, will soon appear.

1. First, this way of communicating strength to Saints gives a double accent to Gods love and mercy.

2. First, it distills a sweetnesse into all the believer hath or doth, when he findes any comfort in his bosome, any enlargement of heart in duty, any support under temptations: To consider whence

whence came all these, what friend sends them in? they come not from my own cisterne, or any creatures? O 'tis my God that hath been here, and left this sweet perfume of comfort behinde him in my bosome, my God, that hath (unawares to me) fill'd my sailes with the gales of his Spirit, and brought me off the flats of my own deadnesse, where I lay a ground. O 'tis his sweet Spirit that held my head, stayed my heart in such an affliction and temptation, or else I had gone away in a fainting fit of unbelief. How can this choose but indear God to a gracious soul? his succours coming so immediately from heaven, which would, be lost, if the Christian had any strength to help himselfe, (though this stock of strength came at first from God) Which, think you, speaks more love and condescent; for a Prince to give a pension to a Favourite, on which he may live by his own care, or for this Prince to take the chief care upon himselfe, and come from day to day to this mans house, and look into his Cupboard, and see what provision he hath, what expence he is at, and so constantly to provide for the man from time to time? Possibly some proud spirit, that likes to be his own man, or loves his meanes better than his Prince, would prefer the former, but one that is ambitious to have the heart and love of his Prince, would be ravish't with the latter. Thus God doth with his Saints, the great God comes and looks into their Cupboard, and sees how they are laid in, and sends in accordingly, as he findes them. *Your heavenly Father knows you have need of these things*, and you shall have them. He knows you need strength to pray, hear, suffer for him, and in *ipsâ horâ dabitur.*

Secondly, this way of Gods dealing with his Saints, addes to the fulnesse and stability of their strength. Were the stock in our own hands, we should soon prove broken Merchants. God knows we are but leaking vessels, when fullest, we could not hold it long; and therefore to make all sure, he sets us under the streamings forth of his strength, and a leaking vessel under a cock gets what it loseth. Thus we have our leakage supplyed continually. This was the provision God made for *Israel* in the wilderneſſe; *He clave the rock, and the rock followed them.* They had not only a draught at present, but it ran in a streame after them; so that you hear no more of their complaints for water; *This Rock was Christ.* Every beleever hath Christ at his 2.

back, following him with ſtrength as he goes, for every condition and trial. One flower with the root is worth many in a poſie, which though ſweet, yet do not grow, but wither as we wear them in our boſomes. Gods ſtrength, as the root keeps our grace lively, without which though as orient as *Adams* was, it would die.

2. The ſecond deſigne God hath in his Saints happineſſe is, that he may ſo expreſſe his mercy and love to them, as may rebound back to him in the higheſt advance of his own glory therein, *Eph.* 1. 4, 12. which is fully attained in this way of empowering Saints, by a ſtrength not of their own, but of their God his ſending, as they are put to expence. Had God given his Saints a ſtock of grace to have ſet up with, and left them to the emprovement of it, he had been *magnified* indeed, becauſe it was more than God did owe the creature, but he had not been *omnified* as now, when not onely the Chriſtians firſt ſtrength to cloſe with Chriſt is from God, but he is beholden ſtill to God for the exerciſe of that ſtrength, in every action of his Chriſtian courſe. As a childe that travels in his fathers company, all is paid for, but his father carries the purſe, not himſelf: ſo the Chriſtians ſhot is diſcharged in every condition; but he cannot ſay this I did, or that I ſuffered, but God wrought all in me and for me. The very combe of pride is cut here, no room for any ſelf exalting thoughts. The Chriſtian cannot ſay, that I am a Saint is mercy, but being a Saint that my faith is ſtrong, this is the childe of my own care and watchfulneſſe. Alas, poor Chriſtian! Who kept thine eye waking, and ſtirr'd up thy care? was not this the off-ſpring of God as well as thy faith at firſt? No Saint ſhall ſay of Heaven when he comes there, This is Heaven which I have built by the power of my might. No, *Jeruſalem above is a City, whoſe builder and maker is God*, Every grace, yea, degree of grace is a ſtone in that building, the topſtone whereof is laid in glory, where Saints ſhall more plainly ſee, how God was not onely Founder to begin, but Benefactour alſo to finiſh the ſame. The glory of the work ſhall not be crumbled, and piece-meal'd out, ſome to God, and ſome to the creature, but all entirely paid in to God, and he acknowledged all in all.

SECT.

SECT. 2.

Is the Christians strength in the Lord, not in himself, Surely then the Christlesse person must needs be a poor impotent creature, void of all strength and ability of doing any thing of it self towards its own salvation. If the ship launch't, rigg'd, and with her sails spread cannot stir, till the winde come faire and fills them, much lesse can the timber that lies in the Carpenters yard, hew and frame it self into a ship. If the living tree cannot grow, except the root communicates its sap, much lesse can a dead rotten stake in the hedge, which hath no root, live of its own accord. In a word, if a Christian, that hath his spiritual life of grace, cannot exercise this life, without strength from above; then surely, one void of this new life, dead in sins and trespasses, can never be able to beget this in himselfe, or concur to the production of it. The state of unregeneracy is a state of impotency, *When we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly*, Rom. 5. 6. And as Christ found the lumpe of mankinde covered with the ruines of their lapsed estate, (no more able to raise themselves from under the weight of Gods wrath which lay upon them, than one buried under the rubbish of a fallen house, is to free himselfe of that weight without help) so the Spirit findes sinners in as helplesse a condition, as unable to repent, or believe on Christ for salvation, as they were of themselves to purchase it. *Confounded* therefore for ever be the *language* of those sons of pride, who cry up the power of nature, as if man with his own *brick* and *slime* of natural abilities were able to reare up such a building, whose top may reach heaven it self. *It is not of him that willeth or runneth, but God that sheweth mercy.* God himself hath *scattered* such *Babel*-builders *in the imaginations of their hearts*, who raiseth this spiritual Temple in the soules of men, *not by might, nor by a power* of their own, *but by his Spirit*, that so *grace, grace*, might be proclaimed before it for ever. And therefore if any yet in their natural estate would become wise to salvation, let them first *become fooles* in their own eyes, and renounce their carnal wisdome, which *perceives not the things of God*, and *beg wisdome of God, who giveth and upbraideth not.*

Use 1.

No Synergia

Rom. 9. 16.

If any man would have ſtrength to beleeve, let them become weak, and dye to their own, for *by ſtrength ſhall no man prevaile*, 1 Sam. 2. 9.

Uſe 2. Secondly, doth the Chriſtians ſtrength lye in God, not in himſelfe? this may for ever keep the Chriſtian humble, when moſt enlarged in duty, moſt aſſiſted in his Chriſtian courſe. Remember, Chriſtian, when thou haſt thy beſt ſuit on, who made it, who paid for it: Thy grace, thy comfort is neither the work of thy own hands, nor the price of thy own deſert, be not for ſhame proud of anothers coſt. That aſſiſtance will not long ſtay, which becomes a nurſe to thy pride; thou art not Lord of that aſſiſtance thou haſt. Thy Father is wiſe, who when he alloweth thee moſt for thy ſpiritual maintenance, even then keeps the Law in his own hands, and can ſoon curb thee, if thou groweſt wanton with his grace. Walk humbly therefore before thy God, and husband well that ſtrength thou haſt, remembring that it is borrowed ſtrength. *Nemo prodiget quod mendicat.* Who will waſte what he begs? or who will give that beggar that ſpends idly his almes? when thou haſt moſt thou canſt not be long from thy God his door. And how canſt thou look him in the face for more, who haſt imbezell'd what thou haſt received?

CHAP. III.

Of acting our faith on the Almighty Power of God.

THe third Branch followeth, which contains an encouraging Amplification annexed to the exhortation in theſe words; *And in the power of his might*, where a twofold enquiry is requiſite for the explication of the phraſe. Firſt, what theſe words import, *The Power of his might*? Secondly, what it is to *be ſtrong in the power of his might*?

For the firſt, the Power of his might: It is an Hebraiſm, & imports nothing but his mighty power; like that phraſe, *Eph.* 1. 6. *To the praiſe of the glory of his grace*, that is, to the praiſe of his glorious grace.

grace. And his mighty power imports no leſſe than his Almighty Power; ſometimes the Lord is ſtiled *mighty and ſtrong*, as *Pſ.*24.8. ſometimes *moſt mighty*, ſometimes *Almighty*, no leſſe is meant in all, than Gods infinite Almighty Power.

For the ſecond, to be ſtrong in the mighty Power, or Power of the Lords might, implyes theſe two acts of faith.

First, a ſetled firme perſwaſion, that the Lord is Almighty in Power. *Be ſtrong in the Power of his might*, that is, be ſtrongly rooted in your faith, concerning this one foundation-truth, that God is Almighty. 1.

Secondly, it implyes a further act of faith, not only to believe, that God is Almighty, but alſo that this Almighty Power of God is engaged for its defence: ſo as to bear up in the midſt of all trials and temptations undauntedly, leaning on the arme of God Almighty, as if it were his own ſtrength; for that is the Apoſtles drift, as to beat us off from leaning on our own ſtrength, ſo to encourage the Chriſtian to make uſe of Gods Almighty Power, as freely as if it were his own; when ever aſſaulted by Satan in any kinde. As a man ſet upon by a thief, ſtirs up all the force and ſtrength he hath in his whole body to defend himſelfe and offend his adverſary; ſo the Apoſtle bids the Chriſtian *be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the Power of his might*, that is, Soul, away to thy God, whoſe mighty Power is all intended and devoted by God himſelfe for thy ſuccour and defence. Go ſtrengthen and entrench thy ſelfe in it by a ſtedfaſt faith, as that which ſhall be laid out to the utmoſt for thy good. From whence theſe two Notes, I conceive, will draw out the fatneſſe of the words. 2.

1. That it ſhould be the Chriſtians great care and endeavour in all temptations and tryals, to ſtrengthen his faith on the Almighty Power of God.

2. The Chriſtians duty and care is not only to beleeve that God is Almighty, but ſtrongly by faith to reſt on this Almighty Power of God, as engaged for his help and ſuccour in all his trials and temptations.

First, it ſhould be the Chriſtians great care in all temptations and trials, to ſtrengthen his faith on the Almighty Power of God. When God holds forth himſelfe as an object of the ſouls truſt and confidence in any great ſtrait or undertaking; com- *Doct.*

monly

monly this attribute of his Almighty power is presented in the promise, as the surest hold-fast for faith to lay hold on; as a Father in rugged way, gives his childe his *arme* to lay hold by, so doth God usually reach forth his Almighty power for his Saints, to exercise their faith on: *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, whose faith God tried above most of his Saints before or since; for not one of those great things which were promised to them, did they live to see performed in their dayes; and how doth God make known himself to them for their support, but by displaying this Attribute? *Exodus 6. 3. I appeared unto Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by the Name of God Almighty.* This was all they had to keep house with all their dayes: with which they lived comfortably, and died triumphantly, bequeathing the promise to their children, not doubting (because God Almighty had promised) of the performance. Thus, *Isa. 26.* where great mercies are promised to *Judah*, and a Song penn'd before-hand to be sung on that gaudie day of their salvation; yet because there was a sharp Winter of Captivity to come between the Promise, and the Spring-time of the Promise; therefore to keep their faith alive in this space, the Prophet calls them up to act their faith on God Almighty, *v. 4. Trust ye in the Lord Jehovah, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.* So when his Saints are going into the furnace of persecution, what now doth he direct their faith to carry to prison, to stake with them but this Almighty power? *1 Pet. 4. 19. Let them that suffer, commit the keeping of their souls to him, as to a faithful Creatour.* Creatour is a name of Almighty Power, we shall now give some Reasons of the Point.

Reas. 1. First, because it is no easie work to make use of this truth, (how plain and clear soever it now appears,) in great plunges of temptation, that God is Almighty; To vindicate this Name of God from those evil reports, which Satan and carnal Reason raise against it, requires a strong faith indeed. I confesse this principle is a piece of natural divinity; That light which findes out a Deity, will evince (if followed close) this God to be Almighty; yet in a carnal heart, it is like a rusty sword, hardly drawn out of the scabbard, and so of little or no use. Such truths are so imprisoned in natural conscience, that they seldome get a faire hearing in the sinners bosome, till God gives them a Goal-

Goal-delivery, and brings them out of their house of bondage, where they are shut up in unrighteousnesse with a high hand of his convincing Spirit. Then, and not till then the soul will believe God is holy, merciful, Almighty; nay, some of Gods peculiar people, and not the meanest for grace amongst them, have had their faith for a time set in this slough, much ado to get over those difficulties and improbabilities, which sense and Reason have objected, so as to rely on the Almighty Power of God, with a notwithstanding. *Moses* himself, a starre of the first magnitude for grace, yet see how his faith blinks and twinkles, till he wades out of the temptation, *Numb.* 11. 21. *The people among whom I am are six hundred thousand, and thou hast said, I will give them flesh that they may eat a whole moneth, shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them to suffice them?* This holy man had lost the sight for a time of the Almighty Power of God, and now he is projecting how this should be done; as if he had said in plain termes, How can this be accomplished? for so God interprets his reasoning, *v.* 23. *And the Lord said unto* Moses, *Is the Lords hand waxed short?* So *Mary*, *John* 11. 32. *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.* And her Sister *Martha*, v. 39. *Lord, by this time he stinketh.* Both gracious women, yet both betrayed the weakenesse of their faith on the Almighty Power of Christ, one limiting him to place; *If thou hadst been here, he had not died*; as if Christ could not have saved his life absent as well as present, sent his health to him as well as brought it with him. The other to time, *Now he stinketh.* As if Christ had brought his Physick too late, and the grave would not deliver up its prisoner at Christs command; and hast thou such an high opinion of thy self, Christian, that thy faith needs not thy utmost care and endeavour for further establishment on the Almighty Power of God, when thou seest such as these dash their foot against this kinde of temptation?

The second reason may be taken from the absolute necessity of this act of faith above others, to support the Christian in the houre of temptation. All the Christians strength and comfort is fetched without doors, and he hath none to send of his errand but faith; This goes to heaven and knocks God up, as he in the parable, his neighbour at midnight for bread: Therefore when faith failes, and the soul hath none to go to market for

supplyes, there must needs be a poore house kept in the meane time. Now faith is never quite laid up, till the soul denyes, or at least questions the Power of God. Indeed, when the Christian disputes the Will of God, whispering within its own bosome, will he pardon? will he save? this may make faith go haltingly to the throne of grace, but not knock the soul off from seeking the face of God: even then faith on the Power of God, will bear it company thither: *If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*; if thou wilt, thou canst pardon, thou canst purge: But
Mat. 8. 2. when the soul concludes he cannot pardon, cannot save, this shoots faith to the heart, so that the soul falls at the foot of Satan, not able more to resist. Now it grows listlesse to duty, indifferent whether it pray or not, as one that sees the well dry, breaks or throwes away his Pitcher.

3. Thirdly, because God is very tender of this flower of his Crown, this part of his Name: Indeed we cannot spell it right and leave out this letter; for that is Gods Name, whereby he is known from all his creatures. Now man may be called wise, merciful, mighty: God only all-wise, all-merciful, Almighty; so that when we leave out this syllable All, we nick-name God, and call him by his creatures name, which he will not answer to. Now the tenderness that God shews to this Prerogative of his, appears in three particulars.

1. First, in the strict command he layes on his people, to give him the glory of his power, *Isa.* 8. 12, 13. *Feare ye not their feare, but sanctifie the Lord of hostes himselfe*: that is, in this sad posture of your affaires, when your enemyes associate, and you seem a lost people to the eye of Reason, not able to contest with such united Powers, which beset you on every side: Now I charge you sanctifie me in giving me the glory of my Almighty Power; beleeve that your God is able of himselfe, without any other, to defend you, and destroy them.

2. Secondly, in his severity to his deareſt children, when they stagger in their faith, and come not off roundly (without reasoning and disputing the case) to relye on his Almighty Power: *Zacharias* did but ask the Angel, *How shall I know this, because I am an old man, and my wife stricken in yeares*; yet for bewraying therein his unbelief, had a signe indeed given him, but such a one as did not only strengthen his faith, but severely punish his unbelief,

unbelief, for he was ſtruck dumb upon the place. God loves his children ſhould believe his Word, not diſpute his power; ſo true is that of *Luther*, *Deus amat curriſtas nonquariſtas.* That which gave accent to *Abrahams* faith, *Rom.* 4. 21. was that he was *fully perſwaded, that what God had promiſed, he was able to performe.*

Thirdly, in the way God takes of giving his choyceſt mercyes, and greateſt ſalvations to his people, wherein he layes the ſcene of his Providence ſo, that when he hath done, it may be ſaid Almighty Power was here. And therefore God commonly puts down thoſe means and ſecond cauſes, which if they ſtood about his work, would blinde and hinder the full proſpect thereof in effecting the ſame, 2 *Cor.* 1. 9. *We received the ſentence of death in our ſelves, that we might not truſt in our ſelves, but in God which raiſeth the dead.* Chriſt ſtayed while *Lazarus* was dead, that he might draw the eyes of their faith more ſingly to look on his power, by raiſing his dead friend, rather than curing him being ſick, which would not have carryed ſo full a conviction of Almightineſſe with it. Yea, he ſuffers a contrary power many times to ariſe in that very juncture of time, when he intends the mercy to his people, that he may reare up the more magnificent pillar of remembrance to his own power, in the ruine of that which conteſts with him. Had God brought *Iſrael* out of *Egypt* in the time of thoſe Kings which knew *Joſeph*, moſt likely they might have had a friendly departure and an eaſie deliverance, but God reſerves this for the reign of that proud *Pharaoh*, who ſhall cruelly oppreſſe them, and venture his Kingdom, but he *will ſatisfie his luſt upon them.* And why muſt this be the time? but that God would bring them forth with a ſtretched-out arme: The magnifying of his power was Gods great deſigne, *Exod.* 9. 16. *In very deed for this cauſe have I raiſed thee up, to ſhew in thee my power, and that my Name may be declared throughout the earth.* 3.

Fourthly, in the prevalency which an argument that is preſſed from his Almighty Power hath with God. It was the laſt ſtring *Moſes* had to his bowe, when he begg'd the life of *Iſrael*, *Numb.* 14. 16. *The Nations which have heard the fame of thee will ſpeak, ſaying, Becauſe the Lord was not able, &c.* And *v.* 17. *Let the Power of my Lord be great*; And with this he hath their pardon thrown him. 4.

The Application of this Point will fall in under the next, which is

CHAP. IV.

Of acting our faith on the Almighty Power of God, as engaged for our help.

Doct. THat it is the Saints duty, and should be their care, not only to believe God Almighty, but also strongly to believe that this Almighty Power of God is theirs, (that is, engaged for their defence and help) so as to make use of it in all straits and temptations.

SECT. I.

I. First, I shall prove that the Almighty Power of God is engaged for the Christians defence, with the grounds of it. Secondly, why the Christian should strongly act his faith on this.

II. First, the Almighty power of God is engaged for the Saints defence; God brought *Israel* out of *Egypt* with an high hand, but did he set them down on the other side the Red-sea, to finde and force their way to *Canaan*, by their own policy or power? When he had opened the iron gate of their house of bondage, and brought them into the open fields, did he vanish as the Angel from *Peter*, when out of prison? No, as a man carries his son, so the Lord bare them in all the way they went, *Deut.* 1.31. This doth lively set forth the Saints march to heaven: God brings a soul out of spiritual *Egypt* by his converting grace, that is the *day of his power*, wherein he makes the soul willing to come out of Satans clutches. Now when the Saint is upon his march, all the Country riseth upon him. How shall this poor creature passe the pikes, and get safely by all his enemies borders? God himself infolds him in the arme of his everlasting strength. *We are kept by the Power of God through faith unto salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. The Power of God is that *shoulder*, on which

which Christ carries his *sheep* home, rejoycing all the way he goes, *Luk.* 15.5. These everlasting armes of his strength are those *Eagles wings*, upon which the Saints are both tenderly and securely conveyed to glory, *Exod.* 19.4. There is a five fold tie or engagement that lies upon Gods power, to be the Saints life-guard.

First, the near relation he hath to his Saints, they are his own dear children, every one takes care of his own, the silly Hen, how doth she bussle and bestir her self to gather her brood under her wing when the Kite appears? No care like that which Nature teacheth. How much more will God, who is the Father of such dispositions in his creature, stir up his whole strength to defend his children? *He said, They are my people, so he became their Saviour*, Isa. 33. 8. As if God had said, Shall I sit still with my hand in my bosome, while my own people are thus misused before my face: I cannot beare it. The Mother as she sits in her house hears one shreek, and knowes the voyce, cryes out, O 'tis my childe, away she throws all, and runnes to him. Thus God takes the alarm of his childrens cry; *I heard Ephraim bemoaning himself*, saith the Lord, his cry pierced his eare, and his eare affected his bowels, and his bowels call'd up his power to the rescue of him. 1.

Secondly, the dear love he beareth to his Saints engageth his power. He that hath Gods heart, cannot want his arme. Love in the creature commands all the other affections, sets all the powers of the whole man on work; thus in God, love sets all his other attributes on work, when God once pitch't his thoughts of doing good to lost man, then wisdome fell on projecting the way, Almighty Power that undertook to raise the fabrick according to wisdomes model. All are ready to effect what God saith he likes. Now the beleeving soul is an object of Gods choicest love, even the same, with which he loves his Son, *John* 17. 26. 2.

First, God loves the beleever as the birth of his everlasting counsel, when a soul beleeves, then Gods eternal purpose and counsel concerning him, (whom he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world, and with whom his thoughts went so long big) brings forth. And how must God needs love that creature, whom he carried so long in the wombe of his eternal pur- 1.

pose? this goodly Fabrick of heaven and earth had not been built, but as a stage whereon he would in time act what he decreed in heaven of old, concerning the saving of thee, and a few more his Elect; and therefore according to the same rate of delight, with which God pleased and entertained himselfe in the thoughts of this before the world was, must he needs rejoyce over the soul now beleeving, with love and complacency unconceivable; and God having brought his counsel thus far towards its issue, surely will raise all the power he hath, rather than be disappointed of his glory, within a few steps of home; I mean, his whole designe in the beleevers salvation; The Lord who hath
Zech. 3. chosen his Saints, (as Christ prayes for *Joshua* their representative will rebuke Satan and all their enemies.

2. Secondly, God loves his Saints as the purchase of his Sons blood; they cost him dear, and that which is so hardly got, shall not be easily lost. He that was willing to expend his Sons blood to gain them, will not deny his power to keep them.

3. Thirdly, God loves the Saints for their likenesse to himselfe, so that if he loves himselfe, he cannot but love himself appearing in them; and as he loves himselfe in them, so he defends himself in defending them. What is it in a Saint that enrageth hell, but the image of God, without which the war would soon be at an end? It is the hatred the Panther hath to man that makes him fly at his picture; *For thy sake we are slain all the day long*: and if the quarrel be Gods, surely the Saint shall not go forth to war at his own cost.

3. Thirdly, the Covenant engageth Gods Almighty power, *Gen.* 17. 1. *I am the Almighty God, walk before me.* There is a League offensive and defensive between God and his Saints, he gives it under his hand, that he will put forth the whole power of his Godhead for them, 1 *Chron.* 17. 24. *The Lord of Hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel.* God doth not parcel himselfe out by retaile, but gives his Saints leave to challenge whatever a God hath as theirs, and let him whoever he is, sit in Gods throne, and take away his crown, that can fasten any untruth on the Holy One; as his Name is, so is his Nature, a God keeping Covenant for ever. The Promises stand as the mountains about *Jerusalem*, never to be removed; the weak as well as the strong Christian is within this line of Communication. Were

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Saints to fight it out in open field by the ſtrength of their own grace, then the ſtrong were more likely to ſtand, and the weak to fall in battel, but both caſtled in the Covenant are alike ſafe.

Fourthly, the Saints dependance on God, and expectation from God in all their ſtraits, oblige this power for their ſuccour; whither doth a gracious ſoul fly in any want or danger from ſin, Satan, or his inſtruments, but to his God? as naturally as the Coney to her burrough; *Pſal.* 57. 3. *At what time I am afraid*, ſaith *David*, *I will truſt in thee*: He tells God he will make bold of his houſe to ſtep into, when taken in any ſtorme; and doth not queſtion his welcome. Thus when *Saul* hunted him, he left a City of gates and barres to truſt God in open field. Indeed all the Saints are taught the ſame leſſon, to renounce their own ſtrength, and relye on the Power of God, their own policy, and caſt themſelves on the wiſdom of God; their own righteouſneſſe; and expect all from the pure mercy of God in Chriſt, which act of faith is ſo pleaſing to God, that ſuch a ſoul ſhall never be aſhamed, *Pſal.* 9. 18. *The expectation of the poor ſhall not periſh.* A Heathen could ſay, when a bird (ſcared by a Hawke) flew into his boſome, I will not betray thee unto thy enemy, ſeeing thou comeſt for Sanctuary unto me. How much leſſe will God yield up a ſoul unto it's enemy, when it takes Sanctuary in his Name, ſaying, Lord, I am hunted with ſuch a temptation, dogg'd with ſuch a luſt, either thou muſt pardon it, or I am damned; mortifie it, or I ſhall be a ſlave to it; take me into the boſome of thy love for Chriſts ſake; caſtle me in the armes of thy everlaſting ſtrength; it is in thy power to ſave me from, or give me up into the hands of my enemy; I have no confidence in my ſelfe or any other: Into thy hands I commit my cauſe, my life, and rely on thee; This dependance of a ſoul undoubtedly will awaken the Almighty Power of God, for ſuch a ones defence: he hath ſworn the greateſt oath that can come out of his bleſſed lips, even by himſelfe, that ſuch as thus fly *for refuge* to *hope* in him ſhall have *ſtrong conſolation*, Heb. 6. 17. This indeed may give the Saint the greater boldneſſe of faith to expect kindly entertainment, when he repairs to God for refuge, becauſe he cannot come before he is look't for, God having ſet up his Name and Promiſes as a ſtrong Tower, both calls his people into 4.

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theſe Chambers, and expects they ſhould betake themſelves thither.

6. Sixthly, Chriſts preſence and employment in heaven layes a ſtrong engagement on God to bring his whole force and power into the field upon all occaſions for his Saints defence; one ſpecial end of his journey to heaven, and abode there is, that he might (as the Saints Solicitour) be ever interceding for ſuch ſupplies and ſuccours of his Father, as their exigencies call for; and the more to aſſure us of the ſame before he went, he did (as it were) tell us, what heads he meant to go upon in his interceſſion, when he ſhould come there; one of which was this, that his Father ſhould keep his children while they were to ſtay in the world, from the evil thereof, *John* 17. 15. Neither doth Chriſt take upon him this work of his own head, but hath the ſame appointment of his Father, for what he now prayes in heaven, as he had for what he ſuffered on earth: He that ordained him a Prieſt to die for ſinners, did not then ſtrip him of his Prieſtly garments (as *Aaron*) but appoints him to aſcend in them to heaven, where he ſits a Prieſt for ever by Gods Oath. And this office of interceſſion, was erected purely in mercy to beleevers, that they might have full content given them for the performance of all that God had promiſed; ſo that Jeſus Chriſt lies Lieger at Court as our Embaſſadour, to ſee all carried fairely between God and us according to agreement: And if Chriſt follows his buſineſſe cloſe, and be faithful in his place to beleevers, all is well; and doth it not behove him to be ſo, who intercedes for ſuch dear relations? Suppoſe a Kings ſon ſhould get out of a beſieged City, where he hath left his wife and children, (whom he loves as his own ſoul,) and theſe all ready to die by ſword or famine, if ſupply come not the ſooner, could this Prince, when arrived at his fathers houſe pleaſe himſelfe with the delights of the Court, and forget the diſtreſſe of his family? or rather would he not come poſt to his father, (having their cries and groans alwayes in his eares) and before he eat or drink, do his errand to his father, and entreat him if ever he lov'd him, that he would ſend all the force of his Kingdome to raiſe the ſiege, rather then any of his dear relations ſhould periſh? Surely (Sirs) though Chriſt be in the top of his preferment, and out of the ſtorme in regard of his own perſon, yet his children

children left behinde in the midst of sins, Satans, and the worlds batteries are in his heart, and shall not be forgotten a moment by him. The care he takes in our businesse appeared in the speedy dispatch he made of his Spirit to his Apostles supply, when he ascended, which assoon almost as he was warme in his seat, at his Fathers right hand, he sent, to the incomparable comfort of his Apostles and us, that to this day, yea, to the end of the world do, or shall believe on him.

SECT. 2.

The second Branch of the point followes: that Saints should eye this Power of God as engaged for them, and presse it home upon their soules till they silence all doubts and feares about the matter; which is the importance of this exhortation: *Be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his might*; Fortifie and entrench your soules within the breast-work of this attribute of Gods mighty Power made over to you by God himself.

First, it is the end as of all Promises to be security to our faith, so of those in particular where his Almighty Power is expresly engaged, that we may count this attribute our portion, and reap the comfort it yields as freely, as one may the crop of his own field: *Walk before me*, saith God to *Abraham*, *I am God Almighty*: set on this as thy portion, and live upon it; The Apostle, *Heb.* 13.6. teacheth us what use to make of promises, *ver.* 5. *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*, there is the promise and the inference, which he teacheth us to draw by faith from this, follows, *ver.* 6. *So we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper.* We, that is, every believer may boldly say, that is, we may conclude God will help: not sneakingly, timorously, perhaps he will; but we may boldly assert it in the face of men and devils, because he that is Almighty hath said it. Now for a Christian not to strengthen his faith on this incomparably sweet attribute, but to sit down with a few weak unsetled hopes, when he may, yea, ought to be strong in the faith of such promises, what is it but to undervalue the blessing of such promises? as if one should promise another house and land, and bid him make them as sure to him-

ſelfe as the Law can binde, and he ſhould take no care to effect this, would it not be interpreted as a ſleighting of his friends kindneſſe? Is it a ſmall matter that God paſſeth over his Almighty power by promiſe to us, and bids us make it as ſure to our ſelves as we can by faith, and we neglect this, leaving the Writings of the promiſes unſealed on our hearts.

2. Secondly, our obedience and comfort are ſtrong or weak as our faith is on this principle.

1. Firſt, our obedience, that being a childe of faith partakes of its Parents ſtrength or weakneſſe; *Abraham* being ſtrong in faith, what an heroick act of obedience did he perform in offering up his Son? his faith being well ſet on the power of God, he carryes that without ſtaggering, which would have laid a weak faith on the ground. No act of faith more ſtrengthens for duty, than that which eyes Gods Almighty power engaged for its aſſiſtance, *Go in this thy might*, ſaid God to *Jideon*, *have not I call'd thee?* as if he had ſaid, Can I not, will I not carry thee through thy work? Away goes *Gideon* in the faith of this, and doth wonders. This brought the righteous man from the Eaſt to Gods foot, though he knew not whither he went, yet he knew with whom he went, God Almighty. But take a ſoul not perſwaded of this how uneven and unſtable is he in his obediential courſe? every threat from man, if mighty, diſmayes him, becauſe his faith not fixt on the Almighty, and therefore ſometimes he will ſhift off a duty to comply with man, and betray his truſt into the hands of a ſorry creature, becauſe he hath fleſhly eyes to behold the power of man, but wants a ſpiritual eye to ſee God at his back, to protect him with his Almighty power; which were his eyes open to ſee, he would not be ſo routed in his thoughts at the approach of a weak creature: *Should ſuch a man as I flee?* ſaid good *Nehemiah*, *Nehem. 6. 11.* He was newly come from the throne of grace, where he had called in the help of the Almighty, *v. 9. O God, ſtrengthen my hands.* And truly now he will rather dye upon the place, than diſparage his God with a diſhonourable retreat.

2. Secondly, the Chriſtians comfort increaſeth or waines, as the aſpect of his faith is to the power of God. Let the ſoul queſtion that or his intereſt in it, and his joy guſheth out, even as blood out of a broken vein: It is true, a ſoul may ſcramble to heaven

heaven with much ado, by a faith of recumbency, relying on God as able to save, without this perswasion of its interest in God; but such a soul goes with a scant side-winde, or like a ship whose masts are laid by the board, exposed to winde and weather, if others better appointed did not tow it along with them. Many feares like waves ever and anon cover such a soul, that it is more under water than above; whereas one that sees it selfe folded in the armes of Almighty power, O how such a soul goes mounting afore the winde, with her sailes fill'd with joy and peace! Let affliction come, stormes arise, this blessed soul knows where it shall land and be welcome. The Name of God is his harbour, where he puts in as boldly, as a man steps into his own house, when taken in a shower. He heares God calling him into this and other his attributes, as *Chambers* taken up for him, *Isa.* 26. *Come my people, enter into thy Chambers.* God calls them his, and it were foolish modesty not to own what God gives, *Isa.* 45. 24. *Surely shall a man say, in the Lord have I righteousnesse and strength*, that is, I have righteousnesse in Gods righteousnesse, strength in his strength; so that in this respect Christ can no more say that his strength is his own, and not the believers, then the husband can say my body is my own, and not my wives. A soul perswaded of this may sing merrily with the sharpest thorne at its breast; so *David*, *Psal.* 57. 7. *My heart is fixed, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise.* What makes him so merry in so sad a place as the Cave where now he was? he will tell you: *verse* 1. where you have him nestling himselfe under the shadow of Gods wings, and now well may he sing care and fear away. A soul thus provided, may lye at ease on a hard bed. Do you not think they sleep as soundly who dwell on *London*-bridge as they who live at *White-hall* or *Cheap-side*, knowing the waves that roare under them cannot hurt them? Even so may the Saints rest quietly over the floods of death it selfe, and feare no ill.

SECT. 3.

Use 1. Is the Almighty power of God engaged for the Saints defence? surely then they will have a hard pull, (the Saints enemies I mean) who meddle with them that are so far above their match. The devil was so cunning, he would have *Job* out of his trench, his hedge down, before he would fall on; but so desperate are men, they will try the field with the Saints, though incircled with the Almighty Power of God. What folly were it to attempt or sit down before such a City, which cannot be blockt up so as no relief can get in: the way to heaven cannot. In the Churches straitest siege, *there is a river which shall make glad this City of God*, with seasonable succours from heaven. The Saints fresh-springs are all from God, and it is as feasible for sorry man to stop the water-courses of the clouds, as to dam up those streams, which invisibly glide like veins of water in the earth, from the fountain-head of his mercy into the bosome of his people: the *Egyptians* thought they had *Israel* in a trap, when they saw them march into such a nook by the sea-side; *They are entangled, they are entangled*; and truly so they had been irrecoverably, had not that Almighty Power which led them on, engaged to bring them off with honour and safety; well, when they are out of this danger; behold, they are in a wilderness, where nothing is to be had for back and belly, and yet here they shall live fourty yeares, without trade or tillage, without begging or robbing of any of the Neighbour-Nations, they shall not be beholden to them for a penny in their way; what cannot Almighty Power do to provide for his people? what can it not do to protect them against the power and wrath of their enemies? Almighty Power stood between the *Israelites* and the *Egyptians*, so that (poor creatures) they could not so much as come to see their enemy: God sets up a dark cloud as a blinde before their eyes, and all the while, his eye through the cloud is looking them into disorder and confusion; And is the Almighty grown weaker now a dayes, or his enemies stronger, that they promise themselves better successe? No, neither; but men are blinder than the Saints enemies of old, who sometimes have fled at the appearances of God among his people, crying out, *Let us flee*,

flee, for the Lord fighteth for them. Whereas there be many now a dayes will rather give the honour of their discomfitures to Satan himself, than acknowledge God in the business; more ready to say the devil thought against them, than God? O you that have not yet worne off the impressions which the Almighty Power of God hath at any time made upon your spirits, beware of having any thing to do with that generation of men, whoever they are. Come not near their *Tabernacle*, cast not thy lot in amongst them, who are enemies to the Saints of the most High, for they are men devoted to destruction. God so loves his Saints, that he makes nothing to give *whole Nations for their ransome.* He rip't open the very wombe of *Egypt*, to save the life of *Israel* his childe, *Isa.*43.3.

Secondly, this shews the dismal, deplorable condition of all you, who are yet in a Christ-lesse state, you have seen a rich Mine open'd, but not a penny of this treasure comes to your share, a truth laden with incomparable comfort, but it is bound for another coast, it belongs to the Saints into whose bosome this truth unlades all her comfort: see God shutting the door upon you, when he sets his children to feast themselves with such dainties, *Esay* 65.13. *My servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty.* God hath his set number, which he provides for; He knowes how many he hath in his family: these and no more shall sit down. One chief dish at the Saints board is the Almighty Power of God; this was set before *Abraham*, and stands before all his Saints, that they may eat to fulnesse of comfort on it; *But thou shalt be hungry*; He is Almighty to pardon, but he will not use it for thee an impenitent sinner; thou hast not a friend on the Bench, not an attribute in all Gods Name will speak for thee: Mercy it self will sit and vote with the rest of its fellow-attributes for thy damnation. God is able to save and help in a time of need, but upon what acquaintance is it that thou art so bold with God, as to expect his saving arme to be stretcht forth for thee? Though a man will rise at midnight to let in a childe, that cryes and knocks at his door, yet he will not take so much paines for a dog, that lies howling there. This presents thy condition, sinner, sad enough, yet this is to tell thy story fairest; for that Almighty Power of God which is engaged for the beleevers *Use 2.*

salvation, is as deeply obliged to bring thee to thy execution, and damnation. What greater tye than an oath? God himselfe is under an oath to be the destruction of every impenitent soul. That oath which God sware in his wrath against the unbeleeving *Israelites*, that they should not enter into his rest, concernes every unbeleever to the end of the world. In the Name of God consider, were it but the oath of a man, or a company of men, that like those in the *Acts*, should sweare to be the death of such a one, and thou wert the man, would it not fill thee with feare and trembling night and day, and take away the quiet of thy life, till they were made friends? What then are their pillows stuft with, who can sleep so soundly without any horrour or amazement, though they be told, that the Almighty God is under an oath of damning them body and soul, without timely repentance? O bethink your selves sinners, is it wisdome, or valour to refuse termes of mercy from Gods hands, whose Almighty power if rejected, will soon bring you into the hands of justice? and how *fearful a thing* that is, to *fall into the hands* of Almighty *God*, no tongue can expresse, no not they who feel the weight of it.

Use 3. Thirdly, this speaks to you, that are Saints indeed, Be strong in the faith of this truth, make it an Article of your Creed: with the same faith that you beleeve there is a God, beleeve also this Gods Almighty power is thy sure friend, and then improve it to thy best advantage. As,

1. First, in agonies of conscience that arise from the greatnesse of thy sinnes, fly for refuge into the Almighty power of God. Truly Sirs, when a mans sinnes are displayed in all their bloody colours, and spread forth in their killing aggravations, and the eye of conscience awakened to behold them through the multiplying, or magnifying glasse of a temptation, they must needs surprize the creature with horrour and amazement; till the soul can say with the Prophet: for all this huge hoast, *There is yet more with me than against me.* One Almighty is more than many Mighties. All these mighty sinnes and devils, make not one Almighty sinne, or an Almighty devil. Oppose to all the hideous charges brought against thee by them this onely attribute. As the *French* Ambassadour once silenced the *Spaniards* pride in repeating his Masters many titles, with one

that

that drowned them all. God himselfe, *Hosea* 11. 9. when he had aggravated his peoples sinnes to the height, then to shew what a God can do, breaks out into a sweet promise: *I will not execute the fiercenesse of mine anger*, and why not? *I am God, and not man.* I will shew the Almightinesse of my mercy. Something like our usual phrase; when a childe or a woman strikes us, I am a man, and not a childe, or woman, therefore I will not strike againe. The very considering God to be God, supposeth him Almighty to pardon as well as to avenge, and this is some relief; But then to consider it is Almighty power in bond and Covenant to pardon, this is more; As none can binde God but himselfe, so none can break the bond himselfe makes: and are they not his own words, that *he will abundantly pardon*? Isa. 55. he will multiply to pardon, as if he had said, I'le drop mercy with your sinne, and spend all I have, rather than let it be said my good is overcome of your evil. It fares with the gracious soul in this case as with a Captaine, that yields his Castle upon gracious termes of having his life spared, and he safely convey'd to his house, there to be setled peaceably in his estate and possessions, for all which he hath the Generals hand and seal, on which he marcheth forth; but the rude souldiers assault him, and put him in feare of his life, he appeals to the General, (whose honour now is engaged for him) and is presently relieved, and his enemyes punisht: Thou mayest poore soul, when accused by Satan, molested by his terrours, say; *It is God that justifies*; I have his hand to it, that I should have my life given me assoon as I laid down my armes and submitted to him, which I desire to do; behold, the gates of my heart are open to let the Prince of peace in, and is not the Almighty able to performe his promise? I commit my self to him as unto a faithful Creatour.

Secondly, improve this Almighty power of God, and thy interest therein, in temptations to sin, when thou art over-powered, and flyest before the face of thy strong corruption, or feareſt thou shalt one day fall by it; make bold to take hold of this attribute, and re-inforce thy selfe from it again to resist, and in resisting, to believe a timely victory over it. The Almighty God stands in sight of thee while thou art in the valley fighting, and stayes but for a call from thee when distressed in battel, and then he

he will come to thy rescue: *Jehoshaphat* cryed, when in the throng of his enemies, and the Lord helped him, much more mayest thou promise thy self his succour in thy soul-combates: Betake thy self to the throne of grace with that promise; *Sinne shall not have dominion over you*: and before thou urgest it (the more to help thy faith,) comfort thy self with this, that though this word Almighty is not expresst, yet it is implied in this and every promise, and thou mayest without adding a title to the Word of God read it in thy soul; sin shall not have dominion over you, saith the Almighty God, for this and all his attributes are the constant seale to all his promises. Now soul put the bond in suit, fear not the recovery, 'tis debt, and so due: He is able whom thou suest, and so there is no fear of losing the charge of the suit, and he that was so gracious to binde himself when he was free, will be so faithful (being able) to perform now he is bound: only while thou expectest the performance of the promise, and the assistance of this Almighty Power against thy corruptions, take heed that thou keep under the shadow of this attribute, and condition of this promise. The shadow will not cool except in it; what good to have the shadow, though of a mighty rock, when we sit in the open Sun? To have Almighty Power engaged for us, and we to throw our selves out of the protection thereof by bold sallies into the mouth of temptation? The Saints falls have been, when they run out of their trench and hold; for like the conies, they are a weak people in themselves, and their strength lies in the rock of Gods Almightinesse, which is their habitation.

Psalme 91. 1.

3. Thirdly, Christian, improve this, when oppresst with the weight of any duty and service, which in thy place and calling lies upon thee. Perhaps thou findest the duty of thy calling too heavy for thy weak shoulders, make bold by faith to lay the heaviest end of thy burden on Gods shoulder, which is thine (if a beleever) as sure as God can make it by promise. When at any time thou art sick of thy work, and ready to think with *Jonas* to run from it; encourage thy self with that of God to *Gideon*, whom he call'd from the flaile to thresh the mountaines, *Go in this thy might*, hath not God call'd thee? fall to the work God sets thee about, and thou engagest his strength for thee. *The way of the Lord is Strength*. Run from thy work, and thou engagest Gods strength

ſtrength againſt thee, he'll ſend ſome ſtorme or other after thee to bring home his runaway ſervant. How oft hath the Coward been kill'd in a ditch, or under ſome hedge, when the valiant ſouldier that ſtood his ground and kept his place got off with ſafety and honour? Art thou call'd to ſuffer? flinch not becauſe thou art afraid, thou ſhalt never be able to bear the croſſe; God can lay it ſo even, thou ſhalt not feel it; though thou ſhouldeſt finde no ſuccour till thou comeſt to the priſon door, yea, till thou haſt one foot on the ladder, or thy neck on the block, deſpair not. *In the Mount will the Lord be ſeen.* And in that hour he can give thee ſuch a look of his ſweet face, as ſhall make the blood come in the gaſtly face of a cruel death, and appear lovely in thy eye for his ſake. He can give thee ſo much comfort in hand, as thou ſhalt acknowledge God is aforehand with thee, for all thy ſhame and pain thou canſt endure for him; And if it ſhould not amount to this, yet ſo much as will bear all thy charges thou canſt be put to in the way, lies ready told in that promiſe, 1 *Cor.* 10.13. Thou ſhalt have it at ſight, and this may ſatisfie a Chriſtian, eſpecially if he conſiders, though he doth not carry ſo much of heavens joy about him to heaven as others, yet he ſhall meet it as ſoon as he comes to his Fathers houſe, where it is *reſerved for him.* In a word, Chriſtian, relie upon thy God, and make thy daily applications to the throne of grace, for continual ſupplies of ſtrength: you little think how kindly he takes it, that you will make uſe of him, the oftner the better, and the more you come for, the more welcome; elſe why would Chriſt have told his diſciples, *Hitherto ye have ask't nothing*; but to expreſſe his large heart in giving, loath to put his hand to his purſe for a little, and therefore by a familiar kind of Rhetorick puts them to riſe higher in asking, as *Naaman* when *Gehazi* asks one talent, entreats him *to take two*; ſuch a bountiful heart thy God hath, while thou art asking a little peace and joy, he bids thee open thy mouth wide, and he'll fill it. Go and ranſack thy heart, Chriſtian, from one end to the other, finde out thy wants, acquaint thy ſelf with all thy weakneſſes, and ſet them before the Almighty, as the *Widow* her empty veſſels before the *Prophet*, hadſt thou more than thou canſt bring, thou mayeſt have them all fill'd. God hath ſtrength enough to give, but he hath no ſtrength to deny, here the Almighty himſelfe (with reverence

be it ſpoken) is weak; even a childe, the weakeſt in grace of his family, that can but ſay Father, is able to overcome him; and therefore let not the weakneſſe of thy faith encourage thee. No greater motive to the bowels of mercy to ſtir up Almighty power to relieve thee, than thy weakneſſe, when pleaded in the ſenſe of it. The pale face and thin cheeks (I hope) move more with us, than the canting language of a ſtout ſturdy beggar. Thus that ſoul that comes laden in the ſenſe of his weak faith, love, patience, the very weakneſſe of them carryes an argument along with them for ſuccour.

CHAP. V.

Wherein is anſwered a grand Objection, that ſome diſconſolate ſoules may raiſe againſt the former Diſcourſe.

Object. But, ſaith ſome diſconſolate Chriſtian, I have prayed again and again for ſtrength againſt ſuch a corruption, and to this day my hands are weak, and theſe ſonnes of *Zerviah* are ſo ſtrong, that I am ready to ſay, all the Preachers do but flatter me, that do poure their oyle of comfort upon my head, and tell me I ſhall at laſt get the Conqueſt of theſe mine enemies, and ſee that joyful day wherein with *David*, I ſhall *ſing to the Lord, for delivering me out of the hands of all mine enemyes.* I have prayed for ſtrength for ſuch a duty, and finde it come off as weakly and dead-heartedly as before. If God be with me by his mighty power to help me, why then is all this befallen me?

Anſw. 1. Firſt, look once again, poor heart, into thy own boſom, and ſee whether thou findeſt not ſome ſtrength ſent into thee, which thou didſt over-look before; this may be, yea, is very ordinary in this caſe, when God anſwers our prayer not in the letter, or when the thing it ſelfe is ſent, but it comes in at the back-door, while we are expecting it at the fore; and truely thus the friend thou art looking for, may be in thine houſe and thou not know it. Is not this thy caſe, poor ſoul? thou haſt been praying for ſtrength againſt ſuch a luſt, and now thou wouldeſt have God preſently put forth

forth his power to knock it on the head, and lay it for dead, that it ſhould never ſtir more in thy boſome: is not this the doore thou haſt ſtood looking for God to come in at, and no ſight or newes of thy God his coming that way? thy corruption yet ſtirs, it may be is more troubleſome than before; now thou askeſt, where is the ſtrength promiſed to thy relief? let me intreat thee before thou layeſt down this ſad Concluſion againſt thy God or ſelfe, ſee whether he hath not conveyed in ſome ſtrength by another door: Perhaps thou haſt not ſtrength to conquer it ſo ſoon as thou deſireſt, but hath he not given further praying ſtrength againſt it? Thou prayedſt before, but now more earneſtly, all the powers of thy ſoul are up to plead with God; Before thou waſt more favourable and moderate in thy requeſt, now thou haſt a zeal, thou canſt take no denial, yea, welcome any thing in the room of thy corruption; Would God but take thy ſin and ſend a croſſe, thou wouldeſt bleſſe him: Now, poor ſoul, is this nothing, no ſtrength? Had not thy God re-inforced thee, thy ſinne would have weakened thy ſpirit of prayer, and not encreaſed it: *David* began to recover himſelfe, when he began to recover his Spirit of prayer. The ſtronger the cry, the ſtronger the childe, I warrant you. *Jacob* wreſtled, and this is called his *ſtrength*, *Hoſ.* 12. It appeared, there was much of God in him that he could take ſuch hold of the Almighty, as to keep it, though God ſeemed to ſhake him off; If thus thou art enabled, ſoul, to deal with the God of heaven, no feare but thou ſhalt be much more able to deal with ſinne and Satan. If God hath given thee ſo much ſtrength, to wreſtle with him above and againſt denials, thou haſt prevailed with the ſtronger of the two: overcome God, and he'll overcome the other for thee. Again, perhaps thou haſt been praying for further ſtrength to be communicated to thee in dutie, that thou mighteſt be more ſpiritual, vigorous, united, ſincere, and the like therein, and yet thou findeſt thy old diſtempers hanging about thee, as if thou hadſt never acquainted God with thy aile; Well, ſoul, look once again into thy boſome with an unprejudiced eye, though thou doeſt not finde the aſſiſting ſtrength thou prayedſt for, yet haſt thou no more ſelf-abaſing ſtrength? perhaps the annoyance thou haſt from theſe remaining diſtempers in dutie, occaſion thee to have a meaner opinion of all thy duties than ever, yea, they make thee abhor thy ſelfe.

in the ſenſe of theſe, as if thou hadſt ſo many loathſome vermein about thee. *Jobs* condition on the dunghil, with all his botches and running ſores on his body, appears deſirable to thee, in compariſon of thine, whoſe ſoul thou complaineſt is worſe than his body. O this afflicts thy ſoul deeply, doth it not? that thou ſhouldeſt appear before the Lord with ſuch a dead, divided heart, and do his work worſt that deſerves beſt at thy hands, and is all this nothing? Surely, Chriſtian, thine eyes are held as much as *Hagars*, or elſe thou wouldeſt ſee the ſtreamings forth of divine grace in this frame of thy heart; ſurely others will think God hath done a mighty work in thy ſoul; What harder and more againſt the haire, than to bring our proud hearts to take ſhame for that, whereof they naturally boaſt and glory? And is it nothing for thee to tread on the very neck of thy duties, and count them matter of thy humiliation and abaſing, which others make the matter of their confidence and ſelf-rejoycing? Good ſtore of vertue hath gone from Chriſt, to dry this iſſue of pride in thy heart, which ſometimes in gracious ones runnes through and through their duties, that it is ſeen, or may be by thoſe that have leſſe grace than themſelves.

2. Secondly, Chriſtian, candidly interpret Gods dealings with thee. Suppoſe it be as thou ſayeſt, thou haſt pleaded the promiſe, and waited on the means, and yet findeſt no ſtrength from all theſe receits, either in thy grace or comfort, now take heed of charging God fooliſhly, as if God were not what he promiſeth, this were to give that to Satan, which he is all this while gaping for. It is more becoming the dutiful diſpoſition of a child, when he hath not preſently what he writes for to his father, to ſay, my father is wiſer than I, his wiſdom will prompt him, what and when to ſend to me, and his fatherly affections to me his childe, will neither ſuffer him to deny any thing that is good, or ſlip the time that is ſeaſonable. Chriſtian, thy heavenly Father hath gracious ends that hold his hand at preſent, or elſe thou hadſt ere this heard from him.

1. Firſt, God may deny further degrees of ſtrength to put thee on the exerciſe of, that thou haſt more carefully. As a mother doth by her childe, that is learning to go, ſhe ſets it down, and ſtands ſome diſtance from it, and bids it come to her, the child feels its legs weak, and cryes for the mothers help, but the mo-

ther

ther steps back on purpose, that the childe should put forth all its little strength in making after her: When a poor soul comes and prayes against such a sin, God seems to step back and stand at a distance; the temptation increaseth, and no visible succour appears, on purpose that the Christian, though weak, should exercise that strength he hath. Indeed we shall finde the sense of a souls weakness, is an especial means to excite it into a further care and diligence: One that knowes his weakness, how prone he is in company to forget himself, in passion how apt he is to flie out, if there be a principle of true grace, this will excite him to be more fearful and watchful, than another that hath obtained greater strength against such great temptations. As a childe that writes for money to his father, none comes presently, this makes him husband that little he hath the better, not a penny now shall be laid out idly; Thus when a Christian hath prayed against such a sin again and again, and yet findes himself weak, prone to be worsted, O how careful will this, should this make such a one of every company, of every occasion? Such a one had not need give his enemy any advantage.

Secondly, God may deny the Christian such assisting strength in duty, or mortifying strength of corruption as he desires, purely on a gracious design, that he may thereby have an advantage of expressing his love in such a way, as shall most kindly work upon the ingenuity of the soul to love God again. Perhaps (Christian) thou prayest for a mercy thou wantest, or for deliverance out of some great affliction, and in the duty thou findest not more assistance than ordinary, yea, many distractions of spirit in it, and mis-giving thoughts with unbelieving feares after it; Well, notwithstanding those defects in thy duty, yet God heares thy prayer, and sends in the mercy on purpose, that he may greaten his love in thine eye, and make it more luscious and sweet to thy taste, from his accepting thy weak services, and passing by the distempers of thy spirit. Here is lesse strength for the duty, that thou mayest have more love in the mercy, nothing will affect a gracious heart more than such a consideration. See it in *David*, *Psal.*116.11,12. *I said in my haste, All men are liars. What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?* As if *David* had said, notwithstanding all the comfortable messages I had from God by his Prophets concerning this matter, my own

prayers, and those remarkable providences, which carried in them a partial answer to them, and performance of what was promised, yet I betray'd much unbelief, questioning the truth of the one, and the return of the other; and hath God notwithstanding all my infirmities fulfill'd my desire, and performed his promise? O what shall I render unto the Lord? Thus *David* reades Gods mercy through the spectacles of his own weakness and infirmity, and it appears great, whereas if a mercy should come in, as an answer to a dutie managed with such strength of faith, and height of other graces, as might free him and his dutie from usual infirmities, this might prove a snare, and occasion some self-applauding, rather than mercy-admiring thoughts in the creature.

3. Thirdly, God may communicate the lesse of his assisting strength, that he may shew the more of his supporting strength, in upholding weak grace: We do not wonder to see a man of strong constitution, that eats his bread heartily, and sleeps soundly, live: But for a crazie body, full of ailes and infirmities, to be so patcht and shored up by the Physicians Art, that he stands to old age, this begets some wonder in the beholders. It may be thou art a poor trembling soul, thy faith is weak, and thy assaults from Satan strong, thy corruptions stirring and active, and thy mortifying strength little, so that in thy opinion they rather gain ground on thy grace, than give ground to it, ever and anon thou art ready to think, thou shalt be cast as a wrack upon the devils shoare: and yet to this day thy grace lives, though full of leaks; now is it not worth the stepping aside to see this strange sight? A broken ship with masts and hull rent and torne, thus towed along by Almightie power, through an angry sea, and Armadoes of sinnes and devils, safely into its harbour. To see a poore dilling or rush-candle in the face of the boisterous winde, and not blown out; in a word, to see a weak stripling in grace held up in Gods armes, till he beats the devil craven: This God is doing in upholding thee: thou art one of those *babes*, out of whose *mouth God is perfecting his praise*, by ordaining such strength for thee, that thou a babe in grace, shalt yet foile a giant in wrath and power.

3. Thirdly, if after long waiting for strength from God, it be as thou complainest, enquire whether the τὸ κατέχον, that which hinders,

ders, be not found in thy self. The head is the seat of animal spirits, yet there may be such obstructions in the body, as the other members may for a time be deprived of them; till the passage be free between Christ thy head and thee, thy strength will not come, and therefore be willing to enquire.

First, hast thou come indeed to God for strength to performe dutie, to mortifie corruption and the like? perhaps thou wilt say, Yes, I have waited on those Ordinances, which are the way in which he hath promised to give out strength. But is this all? thou mayest come to them, and not wait on God in them. Hast thou not carnally expected strength from them, and so put the Ordinance, as she her husband in Gods stead? Hath not the frame of thy spirit some affinity with theirs in *James* 4. 13. *We will go into such a city, and buy, and sell, and get gaine*: Hath not thy heart said, I will go and hear such a man, and get comfort, get strength? and doest thou wonder thou art weak, barren and unfruitful? Are Ordinances God, that they should make you strong or comfortable? Thou mayest heare them answer thee, poor soul, as the King to the woman in the siege of *Samaria*: Help, O prayer, sayest thou, or, O Minister; How can they help except the Lord help: These are but Christs servants: Christ keeps the key of his wine-cellar, they cannot so much as make you drink, when you come to their Masters house; and therefore, poor soul, stay not short of Christ, but presse through all the croud of Ordinances, and ask to speak with Jesus, to see Jesus, and touch him, and vertue will come forth. 1.

Secondly, ask thy soul whether thou hast been thankful for that little strength thou hast; though thou art not of that strength in grace, to run with the foremost, and hold pace with the tallest of thy brethren, yet art thou thankful that thou hast any strength at all? though it be but to cry after them, whom thou seest out-strip thee in grace, this is worth thy thanks. All in *Davids* army attained not to be equal with his few worthies in proweſſe and honour, and yet did not cashiere themselves: thou hast reason to be thankful for the meanest place in the army of Saints, the least communications of Gospel mercy and grace must not be over-look't. Assoon as ever *Moses* with his army was through the sea, they strike up before they stir from the bank-side, and acknowledge the wonderful appearance of Gods 2.

Gods Power and mercy for them, though this was but one ſtep in their way; a howling wilderneſſe preſented it ſelf to them, and they not able to ſubſiſt a few dayes with all their proviſion, for all their great victory, yet *Moſes*, he will praiſe God for this handſel of mercy. This holy man knew the only way to keep credit with God, ſo as to have more, was to keep touch, and pay down his praiſe for what was received. If thou wouldeſt have fuller communications of divine ſtrength, owne God in what he hath done. Art thou weak? bleſſe God thou haſt life. Doeſt thou through feebleneſſe often faile in duty, and fall into temptation? Mourne in the ſenſe of theſe: yet bleſſe God, that thou doeſt not live in a total neglect of duty, out of a prophane contempt thereof, and that inſtead of falling through weakneſs, thou doeſt not lie in the mire of ſin through the wickedneſſe of thy heart. The unthankful ſoul may thank it ſelf, it thrives not better.

3. Thirdly, art thou humble under the aſſiſtance and ſtrength God hath given thee? pride ſtops the conduit; if the heart begin to ſwell, it is time for God to hold his hand and turne the cock, for all that is poured on ſuch a ſoul runs over into ſelf-applauding, and ſo is as water ſpilt in regard of any good it doth the creature, or any glory it brings to God. A proud heart and a lofty Mountain are never fruitful. Now beſide the common wayes that pride diſcovers it ſelf, as by under-valuing others, and over-valuing it ſelfe, and ſuch like, you ſhall obſerve two other ſymptomes of it. Firſt, it appears in bold adventures, when a perſon runs into the mouth of temptation, bearing himſelf up on the confidence of his grace receiv'd. This was *Peters* ſin, by which he was drawn to engage further than became an humble faith, running into the devils quarters, and ſo became his priſoner for a while. The good man, when in his right temper, had thoughts low enough of himſelf, as when he ask't his Maſter, *Is it I?* but he that feared at one time, leſt he might be the traitour, at another cannot think ſo ill of himſelf, as to ſuſpect he ſhould be the denier of his Maſter. What he? No, though all the reſt ſhould forſake him, yet he would ſtand to his colours; Is this thy caſe, Chriſtian? Poſſibly God hath given thee much of his minde, thou art skilful in the Word of life, and therefore thou dareſt venture to breath in corrupt aire,

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as if only the weak ſpirits of leſſe knowing Chriſtians, expoſed them to be infected with the contagion of errour and hereſie; Thou haſt a large portion of grace, or at leaſt thou thinkeſt ſo, and ventureſt to go where an humble-minded Chriſtian would fear his heels ſhould ſlip under him. Truly now thou tempteſt God to ſuffer thy lock to be cut, when thou art ſo bold to lay thy head in the lap of a temptation. Secondly, pride appears in the neglect of thoſe means, whereby the Saints graces and comforts are to be fed when ſtrongeſt. May be, Chriſtian, when thou art under feares and doubts then God hath thy company; thou art oft with thy pitcher at his door, but when thou haſt got any meaſure of peace, there goes preſently ſome ſtrangeneſſe between God and thee: thy pitcher walks not as it was wont to theſe Wells of ſalvation. No wonder if thou (though rich in grace and comfort) goeſt behinde-hand, ſeeing thou ſpendeſt on the old ſtock, and driveſt no trade at preſent to bring in more: Or if thou doeſt not thus neglect duty, yet may be thou doeſt not performe it with that humility, which formerly beautified the ſame: then thou prayedſt in the ſenſe of thy weakneſſe to get ſtrength, now thou prayeſt to ſhew thy ſtrength, that others may admire thee. And if once (like *Hezekiah*) we call in Spectatours to ſee our treaſure, and applaud us for our gifts and comfort, then it is high time for God, if he indeed love us, to ſend ſome meſſengers to carry theſe away from us, which carry our hearts from him.

Fourthly, if thy heart doth not ſmite thee from what hath been ſaid, but thou haſt ſincerely waited on God, and yet haſt not received the ſtrength thou deſireſt, yet let it be thy reſolution to live and die waiting on him. God doth not tell us his time of coming, and it were boldneſſe to ſet on of our own heads. Go, ſaith Chriſt to his diſciples, *Luke* 24. 49. *Stay ye in Jeruſalem, untill ye be endued with Power from on High.* Thus he ſaith to thee, ſtay at *Jeruſalem*, wait on him in the means he hath appointed, till thou beeſt endued with further power to mortifie thy corruptions, &c. And for thy comfort know 4.

Firſt, thy thus perſevering to wait on God, will be an evidence of ſtrong grace in thee: the leſſe encouragement thou haſt to duty, the more thy faith and obedience to bear thee up 1.

in dutie. He that can trade when times are so dead, that all his ware lies upon his hand, and yet drawes not in his hand, but rather trades more and more, sure his stock is great. What, no comfort in hearing, no ease to thy spirit in praying, and yet more greedy to heare, and more frequent in prayer? O soul, great is thy faith and patience.

Secondly, assure thy selfe when thou art at the greatest pinch strength shall come: *They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength*: when the last *handful of meale* was *dressing*, then is the Prophet sent to keep the Widows house. When temptation is strong, thy little strength even spent, and thou ready to yield into the hands of thine enemies, then expect succours from heaven to enable thee to hold out under the temptation: Thus to *Paul*, *My grace is sufficient*, or power from heaven to raise the siege, and drive away the tempter; thus to *Job*, when Satan had him at an advantage, then God takes him off. Like a wise Moderatour, when the Respondent is hard put to it by a subtile Opponent, takes him off, when he would else run him down. *James* 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.*

EPHESIANS 6. 11.

Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

THis verse is a Key to the former, wherein the Apostle had exhorted believers to encourage, and bear up their fainting spirits on the Lord, and the power of his might. Now in these words he explains himself, and shews how he would have them do this, not presumptuously come into the field without that armour, which God hath appointed

pointed to be worne by all his souldiers, and yet with a bravado to trust in the power of God to save them. That soul is sure to fall short of home, (heaven I mean) who hath nothing but a carnal confidence on the Name of God, blowen up by the ignorance of God and himselfe: No, he that would have his confidence duly placed on the power of God, must conscienciously use the meanes appointed for his defence, and not rush naked into the battel, like that fanatick spirit at *Munster*, who would needs go forth, and chase away the whole army, then besieging that Citie, with no other Cannon, than a few words charged with the Name of *The Lord of hostes*, (which he blasphemously made bold to use) saying, *In the Name of the Lord of hostes depart.* But himselfe soon perished; to learne others wisdom by what he paid for his folly. What foolish braving language shall you hear drop from the lips of the most prophane and ignorant among us? they trust in God, hope in his mercy, defie the devil and all his works, and such like stuffe, who yet are poor naked creatures, without the least piece of Gods armour upon their souls. To cashiere such presumption from the Saints Camp, he annexeth this Directory to his exhortation, *Put on the whole armour of God, &c.* So that the words fall into these two general parts.

First, a Direction annex't to the former Exhortation, shewing how we may in a regular way come to be strong in the Lord, that is, by putting on *the whole Armour of God.* 1.

Secondly, a reason or argument strengthening this Direction, *that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* In the Direction observe, 2.

First, the furniture he directs, and that is *Armour.* 1.

Secondly, the kinde or qualitie of this Armour, *Armour of God.* 2.

Thirdly, the quantitie or entirenesse of the Armour; The *whole* Armour of God. 3.

Fourthly, the use of this Armour; *Put on* the whole Armour of God. 4.

To begin with the first, the furniture which every one must get that would fight Christs battels. The question here will be, what is this Armour?

First, by Armour is meant Christ; we read of putting on *the*

Lord Jesus, *Rom.* 13.14. where Christ is set forth under the notion of Armour. The Apostle doth not exhort them for rioting and drunkenness, to put on sobriety and temperance; for chambering and wantonness, put on chastity; (as the Philosopher would have done) but bids, *put on the Lord Jesus Christ*; implying thus much till Christ be put on, the creature is unarmed. 'Tis not a mans morality and Philosophical vertues, that will repel a temptation, sent with a full charge from Satans cannon, though possibly it may the pistol-shot of some lesse solicitation; so that he is the man in Armour, that is in Christ. Again, the Graces of Christ these are Armour, as *the Girdle of truth*, *the Breast-plate of righteousnesse*, and the rest. Hence we are bid also *put on the new man*, *Eph.* 4. 24. which is made up of all the several graces, as its parts and members. And he is the unarm'd soul, that is the unregenerate soul. Not excluding those duties and means which God hath appointed the Christian to use for his defence.

The phrase thus opened; the Point is,

CHAP. I.

Sheweth the Christlesse and graceless soul, to be the soul without Armour, and therein his misery.

Observ. THat a person in a Christlesse, graceless state is naked and unarm'd, and so unfit to fight Christs battels against sin and Satan. Or thus, a soul out of Christ is naked and destitute of all Armour to defend him against sin and Satan. God at first sent man forth in compleat Armour, *being created in righteousnesse and true holinesse*; but by a wile the devil strip't him, and therefore as soon as the first sin was compleated, it is written, *Gen.* 3.7. *They were naked*, that is, poor weak creatures, at the will of Satan a subdued people, disarm'd by their proud Conquerour, and unable to make head against him. Indeed it cost Satan some dispute to make the first breach, but after that he had once the gates open'd to let him in as Conquerour into the heart of man, he playes *Rex*: behold, a troop of other sins croud in after him, without any.

any ſtroak or ſtrife, inſtead of confeſſing their ſins, they run their head in a buſh, and by their good will would not come where God is, and when they cannot flie from him, how do they prevaricate before him? They peale one of another, ſhifting the ſin rather than ſuing for mercy. So quickly were their hearts hardened through the deceitfulneſſe of ſin. And this is the woful condition of every ſon and daughter of *Adam*, naked he findes us, and ſlaves he makes us, till God by his effectual call delivers us from the power of Satan *into the Kingdome of his dear Son*, which will further appear, if we conſider this Chriſtleſſe ſtate in a four-fold notion.

Firſt, it is a ſtate of alienation from God, *Epheſ.* 2. 12. *Ye were without Chriſt, being aliens from the Common-wealth of Iſrael, ſtrangers from the Covenant of Promiſe, &c.* Such a one hath no more to do with any Covenant-promiſe, than he that lives at *Rome* hath to do with the Charter of *London*, which is the birth-right of its own Deniſons, not Strangers. He is without God in the world, he can claime no more protection from God, than an out-law'd ſubject from his Prince; If any miſchief befalls him, the mends is in his own hands, whereas God hath his hedge of ſpecial providence about his Saints, and the devil, though his ſpite be moſt at them, dares not come upon Gods ground to touch any of them, without particular leave. Now what a deplored condition is that, wherein a ſoul is left to the wide world, in the midſt of legions of luſts and devils, to be rent and torne like a ſilly hare among a pack of hounds, and no God to call them off? Let God leave a people, though never ſo warlike, preſently they loſe their wits, cannot finde their hands; A company of children or wounded men may riſe up, and chaſe them out of their fenced Cities, becauſe God is not with them; which made *Caleb* and *Joſhuah* pacifie the mutinous Iſraelites at the tydings of Gyants and walled Cities, with this; *They are bread for us, their defence is departed from them.* How much more muſt that ſoul be as bread to Satan, that hath no defence from the Almighty; Take men of the greateſt parts, natural or acquired accompliſhments, who only want an union with Chriſt, and renewing grace from Chriſt: O what fooles doth the devil make of them, leading them at his pleaſure, ſome to one luſt, ſome to another; the proudeſt of them all is ſlave to one or other, though 1.

it be to the ruining of body and soul for ever. Where lyes the mystery, that men of such parts and wisdom, should debase themselves to such drudgery work of hell? even here, they are in a state of alienation from God, and no more able of themselves to break the devils prison, than a slave to run from his chain.

2. Secondly, the Christlesse state is a state of ignorance, and such must needs be naked and unarm'd. He that cannot see his enemy, how can he ward off the blow he sends? One seeing Prophet leads a whole army of blinde men whither he pleaseth. The imperfect knowledge Saints have here, is Satans advantage against them; he often takes them on the blinde side, how easily then may he with a parcel of good words carry the blinde soul out of his way, who knows not a step of the right? Now that the Christlesse state is a state of ignorance, See *Eph.* 5. 8. *Ye were sometimes darkneſſe, but now are ye light in the Lord.* Ye were *darkneſſe*, not *in the dark*, so one that hath an eye may be. A childe of light is often in the dark, concerning some truth or promise, but then hath a spiritual eye, which the Christlesse person wants, and so is darkneſſe. And this darkneſſe cannot be enlightned, but by its union with Christ, which is expreſt in the following phrase; *But now are ye light in the Lord.* As the eye of the body once put out, can never be restored by the creatures Art, so neither can the spiritual eye, lost by *Adams* sinne, be restored by the teaching of men or Angels. It is one of the diseases which Christ came to cure, *Luke* 4. 18. 'Tis true, there is a light of reason, which is imparted to every man by nature, but this light is darkneſſe, compared with the Saints. As the night is dark to the day, even when the moon is in its full glory. This night-light of reason may save a person from some ditch or pond, great and broad sinnes, but it will never help him to escape the more secret corruptions, which the Saints sees like atomes in the beams of spiritual knowledge. There is such curious work the creature is to do, which cannot be wrought by candle-light of natural knowledge. Nay more, where the common illumination of the Spirit is superadded to this light of nature, yet that is darkneſſe compar'd with the sanctifying knowledge of a renewed soul, which doth both discover spiritual truths, and warme the heart at the same time with the love of truth, having

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like the Sun a prolifical and quickening vertue, which the other wants; so that the heart lyes under such common illuminations cold and dead. He hath no more strength to resist Satan, than if he knew not the command; whereas the Christians knowledge, even when taken Prisoner by a temptation, pursues and brings back the soul, as *Abraham* his Nephew, out of the enemies hands; which hints the third.

Thirdly, the Christlesse state is a state of impotency, *Rom.* 5. 3. *When we were without strength, Christ* came *to dye for the ungodly.* What can a disarm'd people that have not sword or gun do to shake off the yoke of a conquering enemy? Such a power hath Satan over the soul, *Luke* 11. 21. He is call'd the *Strong man* that keeps the soul as his *Palace:* If he hath no disturbance from heaven, he need feare no mutiny within; he keeps all in peace there. What the Spirit of God doth in a Saint, that in a manner doth Satan in a sinner. The Spirit fills the heart of his with love, joy, holy desires, feares; so Satan fills the sinners heart with pride, lust, lying: *Why hath Satan filled thy heart,* saith *Peter*? And thus fill'd with Satan (as the drunkard with wine) he is not his own man, but Satans slave.

Fourthly, the state of unregeneracy is a state of friendship with sinne and Satan. If it be enmity against God, (as it is) then friendship with Satan. Now it will be hard to make that soul fight in earnest against his friend. Is Satan divided? will the devil within fight against the devil without? Satan in the heart shut out Satan at the door? sometimes indeed there appears a scuffle between Satan and a carnal heart, but it is a meer cheat, like the fighting of two fencers on a stage, you would think at first they were in earnest, but observing how wary they are, where they hit one another, you may soon know they do not mean to kill: and that which puts all out of doubt, when the prize is done, you shall see them making merry together, with what they have got of their Spectatours, which was all they fought for; when a carnal heart makes the greatest buffle against sin by complaining of it, or praying against it, follow him but off the stage of duty, (where he hath gained the reputation of a Saint, the prize he fights for) and you shall see them sit as friendly together in a corner as ever. 4.

First,

1. First, this takes away the wonder of Satans great Conquests in the world: when you look abroad, and see his vast Empire, and what a little spot of ground contains Christs subjects, what heaps of precious soules lie prostrate under this foot of pride, and what a little regiment of Saints march under Christs banner; perhaps the strangenesse of the thing may make you ask, Is hell stronger than heaven? the armes of Satan more victorious than the Crosse of Christ? No such matter: consider but this one thing, and you will wonder that Christ hath any to follow him, rather than that he hath so few. Satan findes the world unarm'd, when the Prince of the world comes, he findes nothing to oppose; the whole soul is in a disposition to yield at first summons; and if Conscience, Governour for God in the creature stands out a while, all the other powers, as will and affections are in a discontent, (like mutinous souldiers in a garrison) who never rest till they have brought over conscience to yield, or against its command set open the City gate to the enemy, and so deliver traiterously their conscience prisoner to their lusts: But when Christ comes to demand the soul, he meets a scornful answer: *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of the most High. We will not have this man to reigne over us.* With one consent they vote against him, and rise up as the *Philistines* against *Sampson*, whom they call'd *the Destroyer of the Country*. *Ye will not come unto me*, saith Christ. O how true are poor sinners to the devils trust! They will not deliver the Castle they hold for Satan, till fired over their heads. *Pharaoh* oppoſeth *Moses* on one hand, and *Israel* cry out upon him on the other. Such measure hath Christ both at Satans hand, and the sinners. That which lessened *Alexanders* Conquests, was, he overcame a people buried in barbarisme, without armes or discipline of war; and that which heightened *Cesars*, (though not so many) he overcame a people more warlike and furnish't. Satans victories are of poor ignorant, graceless souls, who have neither armes, nor hands, nor hearts to oppose; but when he assaults a Saint, then he sits down before a City with gates and bars, and ever riseth with shame; unable to take the weakest hold, to pluck the weakest Saint out of Christs hands; but Christ brings soules out of his dominion with a high hand, in spite of all the force and fury of hell, which like *Pharaoh* and his hoste pursue them.

Secondly,

Secondly, this gives us a reason why the devil hath so great a spite against the Gospel. Why? because this opens a magazine of armes and furniture for the soul; the Word is that *Tower of David, Cant.* 4. 4. *built for an Armoury, wherein there hang a thousand bucklers; all the shields of mighty men.* Hence the Saints have ever had their Armour, and the preaching of the Gospel unlocks it. As Gospel-light ascends, so Satans shady Kingdom of darkness vanisheth. *Rev.* 14. 6. there one Angel comes forth to *preach the everlasting Gospel*, and another Angel followes at his back, *verse* 8. crying *Victoria, Babylon is fallen, is fallen.* The very first charge the Gospel gave to the Kingdome of darkness, shak't the foundations thereof, and put the legions of hell to the run. The Seventy, whom Christ sent out, bring this speedy account of their ambassage; *Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy Name*: and Christ answers, *I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.* As if he had said, 'tis no newes you tell me, I beheld Satan falling when I sent you: I knew the Gospel would make work where it came; and therefore no wonder Satan labours to dispossesse the Gospel, which dispossesseth him; he knows that Army is near lost, whose magazine is blowen up; 'Tis true indeed, under the very Gospel the devil rageth more in such swinish sinners, as are given over of God to be possest of that fiend, for rejecting of his grace; but he is cast out of others, who *before the loving kindnesse of God to man appeared* in the Gospel, were commanded by him, *serving divers lusts and pleasures*; But now by the light of the Gospel they see their folly, and by the grace it brings are enabled to renounce him. This, this is that which torments the foule spirit, to see himself forsaken of his old friends and servants, and this new Lord to come and take his subjects from him: and therefore he labours either by persecution to drive the Gospel away, or by policy to perswade a people to send it away from their coasts, and was he ever more likely to effect it among us? What a low esteem hath he brought the preaching of the Gospel unto? the price is fallen half in half to what it was some years past, even among those that have been counted the greatest Merchants upon the Saints Exchange. Some, that have thought it worth crossing the Seas, even to the *Indies* (almost as far as others fetch their gold) to enjoy the Gospel, are loath now to crosse the

Use 2.

ſtreet to hear it at ſo cheap a rate; And ſome that come, (who formerly trembled at it) make it moſt of their errand to mock at, or quarrel with it. Nay, it is come to ſuch a paſſe, that the Word is ſo heavy a charge to the ſqueamiſh ſtomacks of many Profeſſors, that it comes up againe preſently, and abundance of choler with it againſt the Preacher, eſpecially if it fall foule of the ſins and errours of the times, the very naming of which is enough to offend, though the Nation be ſinking under the weight. What reproaches are the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel laden withal? I call heaven and earth to witneſſe, whether ever they ſuffered a hotter perſecution of the tongue, than in this apoſtatizing age. A new generation of Profeſſours are ſtarted up, that will not know them to be the Miniſters of Chriſt, though thoſe before them, (as well in grace as time, more able to derive their ſpiritual pedigree, than themſelves) have to their death owned them for their ſpiritual fathers. And muſt not the Ark needs ſhake, when they that carry it are thus ſtruck at, both in their perſon and office? what are theſe men doing? alas, they know not, *Father, forgive them*: They are cutting off their right hand with their left; they are making themſelves and the Nation naked, by deſpiſing the Goſpel, and thoſe that bring it.

Uſe 3. Conſider your deplored eſtate, who are wholly naked and unarm'd. Can you pity the begger at your door, (when you ſee ſuch in a winter-day, ſhivering with naked backs, expoſed to the fury of the cold) and not pity your own far more diſmal ſoul-nakedneſſe, by which thou lyeſt open to heavens wrath, and hells malice? Shall their nakedneſſe cover them with ſhame, fill them with feare of periſhing, which makes them with pitiful moanes knock and cry for relief, (as it is reported of *Ruſſia*, where their poor (through extream neceſſity) have this deſperate manner of begging in their ſtreets; *Give me and cut me, give me and kill me*?) and canſt thou let Satan come and cut thy throat in thy bed of ſloth, rather than accept of clothes to cover, yea, Armour to defend thee? (I mean Chriſt and his grace, which in the Goſpel is tendered to you.) And do not lightly beleeve your own flattering hearts, if they ſhall tell you, you are provided of theſe already. I am afraid many a gaudy Profeſſour will be found as naked in regard of Chriſt, and truth of grace, as drunkards and

ſwearers

swearers themselves; Such there are, who content themselves with a Christ in Profession, in gifts, and in dutyes, but seek not a Christ in solid grace, and so perish; those indeed are an ornament to the Christian, as the scarfe and feather to the souldier, but these quench not the bullet in battel, 'tis Christ and his grace doth that, therefore labour to be sound rather than brave Christians. Grace embellisht with gifts is the more beautiful, but these without grace only the richer spoile for Satan.

The second Branch of the first general part of the words followes: and that is, the quality or kinde of that Armour, the Christian is here directed to provide. It is not any trash will serve the turn, better none than not Armour of proof, and none such, but Armour of God: In a twofold respect it must be of God. First, in institution and appointment. Secondly, in constitution.

CHAP. II.

Sheweth, that the Armour we use against Satan, must be divine in the Institution, such only as God appoints.

FIrst, the Christians Armour which he weares must be of divine Institution and appointment. The Souldier comes into the field with no armes, but what his General commands, 'tis not left to every ones fancy to bring what weapons he please, this will breed confusion. The Christian souldier is bound up to Gods order, though the army be on earth, yet the Councel of War sits in heaven; This duty ye shall do, that means ye shall use; and to do more or use other than God commands, though with some seeming successe against sin; such shall surely be call'd to account for this boldnesse. The discipline of war among men is strict in this case. Some have suffered death by a Councel of war, even when they have beaten the enemy, because out of their place, or beside their order. God is very precise in this point, he will say to such as invent wayes to worship him of their own, coyne means to mortifie corruption, obtain comfort in their own mint; *Who hath required this at your hands?* this is *Observ.*

truly to be *righteous over-much*, (as *Solomon* speaks) when we will pretend to correct Gods Law, and adde supplements of our own to his rule. Who will pay that man his wages that is not set on work by God? God tells *Israel*, the false Prophets shall do them no good, because they come not of his errand; so neither will those wayes and means help, which are not of Gods appointing; Gods thoughts are not as mans, nor his wayes as ours, which he useth to attain his ends by. If man had been to set forth the Israelitish Army, now to march out of *Egypt*; surely his wisdome would have directed rather to have plundered the *Egyptians* of their horse and armes, (as more necessary for such an expedition) than to borrow their jewels and eare-rings, but God will have them come out naked and on foot; and *Moses* keeps close to his order; yea, when any horses were taken in battel, because God commanded they should be houghed, they obeyed, though to their seeming disadvantage. It was Gods war they waged, and therefore but reasonable they should be under his command, they encamp't and march't by his order; as the Ark moved or rested, they fought by his command, the number appointed by him, the means and weapons they should use, all prescribed by God, as in the assault of *Jericho*: and what is the Gospel of all this? (for surely God had an eye in that to our marching to heaven, and our fighting with these cursed spirits and lusts that stand in our way) but that we should fight lawfully, using those meanes, which we have from his mouth in his Word?

Jer. 23. 32.

Use 1. This reproveth two sorts:

First, those that fight Satan in Armour, that hath no divine Institution; as,

1. First, the Papist. Look into his Armoury, and hardly a piece that will be found Armour of God. They fight in the Popes Armour: his authority is the shop, wherein their weapons are forged; It were a kinde of pennance to your patience, to repeat all the several pieces of Armour, with which they load silly souls, too heavy indeed for the broadest shoulders among them to bear; yea, more than the wiser sort of them mean to use, their masles, mattens, vigils, pilgrimages, Lent-fasts, whippings, vowes of chastity, poverty, with a world of such trash; where is a Word of God for these? who hath required these things at their

their hands? a thousand woes will one day fall upon those Impostors, who have strip't the people of the true Armour of God, and put these reeds and bul-rushes in their hands. This may justifie us in the sight of God and men, for our departure from them, who will force us to venture the life of our soules in such paper-armour, when God hath provided better.

Secondly, the carnal Protestant, who fights in fleshly Armour. 2 *Cor.* 10.3. the Apostle speaks there of *warring after the flesh*, 2. that is, with weapons or means, which mans carnal wisdome prompts to, and not Gods commands, and so are weak. How few are clad with other in the day of battel; First, when Satan tempts to sin, if he hath not presently a peaceable entrance, yet the resistance commonly made is carnal; the strength carnal they rest on, their own, not Gods; the motives carnal, as the fear of man more than of God. Where one saith, How shall I do this and sin against God? many in their hearts say, How shall I do this and anger man, displease my Master, provoke my Parents, and lose the good opinion of my Minister? *Herod* feared *John*, and did many things: had he fear'd God, he would have laboured to have done every thing. The like may be said of all other motives, which have their spring in the creature, not in God; they are Armour which will not out-stand shot. If thy strength lie in a creature-lock, it may be soon cut off; if in God it will hold, as his command; *It is written:* I cannot do it, but I must set my foot on the Law of my Maker. Or the love of Christ; I cannot come at my lust, but I must go over my bleeding Saviour, and therefore away, foule Tempter, I hate thee and thy motion. This foundation is rock, and will stand; but if it be some carnal respect that balanceth thee, another more weighty may be found of the same kinde, which will cast the scales another way. She that likes not the man because of his dresse only, may soon be gain'd when he comes in another habit. Satan can change his suit, and then thy mouth will be stop't when thy carnal argument is taken off. Secondly, when the Word or Conscience rebuke for sin, what is the Armour that men commonly cover their guilty soules withal? truly no other than carnal. If they cannot evade the charge that these bring, then they labour to mitigate it, by extenuating the fact. 'Tis true, will they say, I did (I confesse) commit such a fault, but I was drawen in;

The woman gave me, and I did eat, was *Adams* fig-leaf armour: 'tis but once or twice, and I hope that breaks no such squares, was this such a great busineſſe? I know jolly Chriſtians will do as much as this comes to; I thank God, I cannot be charged for whore or thief: This is the armour that muſt keep off the blow. But if Conſcience will not be thus taken off, then they labour to divert their thoughts, by ſtriking up the loud muſick of carnal delights, that the noiſe of one may drown the other, or with *Cain*, they will go from the preſence of the Lord, and come no more at thoſe Ordinances which make their head ake, and hinder the reſt of their raving conſciences. If yet the ghoſt haunts them, then they labour to paciſie it, with ſome good work or other, which they ſet againſt their bad; their almes and charity in their old age, muſt expiate the oppreſſion and violence of their former dayes: as if this little frankincenſe were enough to aire and take away the plague of Gods curſe, which is in their ill-gotten goods. Thus poore creatures catch at any ſorry covering, which will not ſo much as hide their ſhame, much leſſe choak the bullet of Gods wrath, when God ſhall fire upon them; this muſt he armour of Gods appointing. *Adam* was naked for all his fig-leaves, while God *taught him to make coats of skins*, covertly (as ſome think) ſhadowing out *Chriſt* the true *Lambe of God*, whoſe righteouſneſſe alone was appointed by him to cover our ſhame, and arme our naked ſouls from the ſight and ſtroke of his juſtice.

Gen. 3. 21.

2. Secondly, it reproves thoſe who uſe the Armour of God, but not as God hath appointed, which appears in three ſorts.

1. Firſt, when a perſon uſeth a duty appointed by God, not as Armour of defence againſt ſinne, but as a cover for ſin. Who would think him an enemy that weares Chriſts colours in his hat, and martcheth after Chriſt in the exerciſe of all the duties of his worſhip? ſuch a one may paſſe all the Courts of guard, without ſo much as being bid ſtand, all take him for a friend; and yet ſome ſuch there are, who are fighting againſt Chriſt all the while. The hypocrite is the man, he learnes his poſtures, gets the Word, hath his tongue tip't with Scripture language, and walks in the habit of a Chriſtian, meerly on a deſign to drive his trade the more cloſely; Like ſome high-way men in our dayes, who rob in the habit of ſouldiers, that they may be the leſſe ſuſpected;

pected; this is desperate wickednesse indeed, to take up Gods armes, and use them in the devils service; of all sinners such shall finde least mercy; false friends shall speed worse than open enemies.

Secondly, they use not the Armour of God, as God hath appointed, who put a carnal confidence therein. We must not confide in the Armour of God, but in the God of this Armour, because all *our weapons are* only *mighty through God*, 2 *Cor.* 10. The Ark was the meanes of the Jewes safety, but carnally applauded and gloried in, hastened their overthrow: so duties and Ordinances, gifts and graces in their place, are means for the souls defence; Satan trembles as much as the *Philistines* at the *Ark*, to see a soul diligent in the use of duty, and exercise of grace; but when the creature confides in them, this is dangerous. As some, when they have prayed, think they please God for all day, though they take little heed to their steps. Others have so good an opinion of their faith, sincerity, knowledge, that you may assoon make them beleeve they are dogs, as that they may ever be taken in such an errour or sinful practice. Others, when assisted in duty, are prone to stroak their own head with a *Bene feci sti Bernarde*, and so promise themselves to speed, because they have done their errand so well. What speak such passages in the hearts of men, but a carnal confidence in their armour to their ruine? Many souls (we may safely say) do not only perish praying, repenting and beleeving after a sort, but they perish by their praying and repenting, &c. while they carnally trust in these. As it falls out sometimes, that the souldier in battel loseth his life by means of his own Armour, it is so heavy he cannot fly with it, and so close buckled to him, that he cannot get it off, to fly for his life without it. If we be saved, we must come naked to Christ for all our duties, we will not flie to Christ while confiding in them, and some are so lock't into them, that they cannot come without them, and so in a day of temptation are trampled under the feet of Gods wrath, and Satans fury. The poor *Publican* throws down his armes, (that is, all confidence in himselfe) cryes for quarter at the hands of mercy; *God be merciful unto me a sinner*, and he comes off with his life, he went away justified: but the Pharisee, loaden with his righteousnesse, and conceited of it, stands to it, and is lost.

2.

Thirdly,

3. Thirdly, they do not use the Armour of God as such, who in the performing of divine duties, eye not God through them, and this makes them all weak and uneffectual. Then the Word is mighty, when read as the Word of God, then the Gospel preach't, powerful to convince the conscience, and revive the drooping spirit, when heard, as the appointment of the great God, and not the exercise of a mean creature. Now it will appear in three things, whether we eye divine appointment in the meanes.

1. First, when we engage in a duty, and look not up to God for his blessing. Didst thou eye Gods appointment in the meanes, thou wouldest say, Soul, if there come any good of thy present service, it must drop from heaven, for it is Gods appointment, not mans: And I can profit whether God will or no? or think to finde and bring away any soul-enriching treasure from his Ordinance without his leave? had I not best to look up to him, by whose blessing I live more than by my bread?

2. Again, Secondly, it appears we look not at Gods appointment, when we have low thoughts of the means. What is *Jordan* that I should wash in it? what is this preaching that I should attend on it, where I heare nothing but I knew before? what these beggarly elements of water, and bread, and wine? Are not these the reasonings of a soul that forgets who appoints these? Didst thou remember who commands, thou wouldest not question what the command is; what though it be clay, let Christ use it, and it shall open the eyes, though in it self more like to put them out. Hadst thou thy eye on God, thou wouldest silence thy carnal reason with this; 'Tis God sends to me such a duty, whatsoever he saith unto me I will do it, though he should send me (as Christ them) to draw wine out of pots fill'd with water.

3. Thirdly, when a soul leaves off a duty, because he hath not in it what he expected from it. O, saith the soul, I see it is in vain to follow the means as I have done; still Satan foiles me, I will even give over. Doest thou remember, soul, 'tis Gods appointment? surely then thou wouldest persevere in the midst of discouragements. He that bids thee pray, bids thee pray without ceasing. He that bids thee hear, bids thee wait at the posts of

of wisdome: thou wouldest reason thus, God hath set me on duty, and here I'le stand, till God takes me off and bids me leave praying.

CHAP. III.

Sheweth that the Armour we use for our defence against Satan, must not onely be divine by Institution, but constitution also.

SEcondly, the Christians Armour must be Armour of God, in regard of its make and constitution. My meaning is, 'tis not onely God, that must appoint the weapons and armes the Christian useth for his defence: but he must also be the efficient of them, he must work all their work in them and for them. Prayer is an appointment of God, yet this is not armour of proof, except it be a Prayer of God flowing from his Spirit. Hope, that is the Helmet the Saint by command is to wear, but this hope must be Gods creature; *who hath begotten us to a lively hope.* Jude 20. Faith that's another principal piece in the Christians furniture, 1 Pet. 1. 3. but it must be *the faith of Gods Elect.* He is to take righteousnesse and holinesse for his breast-plate: but it must be *true holinesse*, Eph. 4. 24. *Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousnesse and true holinesse.* Thus you see, it is not Armour as Armour, but as Armour of God, that makes the soul impregnable. *That which is borne of God overcometh the world.* A faith borne of God, a hope borne of God, but the spurious adulterous brood of duties and graces, being begot of mortal seed, cannot be immortal. Tit. 1. 1. Ephes. 4. 24.

Use. Must the souls Armour be of Gods make? be exhorted then to look narrowly, whether the Armour ye weare, be the workmanship of God or no. There is abundance of false ware put off now adayes: little good Armour worne by the multitude of Professours: 'tis Satans after-game he playes, if he cannot please the sinner with his naked state of prophaneness; then to put him off with something like grace, some slighty stuffe, that shall neither do him good, nor Satan hurt; thus many like children,

that cry for a knife or dagger, and are pleas'd as well with a bone knife, and wooden dagger, as with the best of all? so they have some armour, it matters not what. Pray they must, but little care how it be performed: Beleeve in God? yes, they hope they are not infidels: but what it is, how they come by it, or whether it will hold in an evil day, this never was put to the question in their hearts. Thus thousands perish with a vain conceit, they are arm'd against Satan, death and judgement, when they are *miserable and naked*, yea, worse on it than those who are more naked, (those I mean) who have not a rag of civility, to hide their shame from the worlds eye; and that in a double respect.

1. First, it is harder to work on such a soul savingly, because he hath a forme, though not the power, and this affords him a plea. A soul purely naked, nothing like the wedding garment on, he is speechlesse; the drunkard hath nothing to say for himselfe, when you ask him why he lives so swinishly; you may come up to him, and get within him, and turn the very mouth of his conscience upon him, which will shoot conviction into him: But come to deal with one that prayes and heares, one that is a pretender to faith and hope in God, here is a man in glistering armour, he hath his weapon in his hand, with which he will keep the Preacher, and the Word he chargeth him with at armes length. Who can say, I am not a Saint? what duty do I neglect? here's a breast-work he lyes under, which makes him not so faire a mark either to the observation or reproof of another, his chief defect being within, where mans eye comes not. Again, 'tis harder to work on him, because he hath been tamper'd with already, and miscarried in the essay. How comes such a one to be acquainted with such duties, to make such a Profession? was it ever thus? No, the Word hath been at work upon him, his conscience hath scared him from his trade of wickednesse into a forme of Profession, but taking in short of Christ, for want of a through change, it is harder to remove him than the other: he is like a lock whose wards have been troubled; which makes it harder to turn the Key, than if never potter'd with. 'Tis better dealing with a wilde ragged colt, never back't, than one that in breaking hath took a wrong stroak. A bone quite out of joynt than false set. In a word, such a one hath more to deny than a pro-

profane perſon; the one hath but his luſts, his whores, his ſwill and draffe; but the other hath his duties, his ſeeming graces. O how hard is it to perſwade ſuch a one to light, and hold Chriſts ſtirrup, while he and his duties are made Chriſts foot-ſtool.

Secondly, ſuch a one is deepeſt in condemnation. None ſink ſo far into hell as thoſe that come neareſt heaven, becauſe they fall from the greateſt height. As it aggravates the torments of damned ſouls in this reſpect above devils, they had a cord of mercy thrown out to them, which devils had not: ſo by how much God by his Spirit waits on, pleads with, and by both gains on a ſoul more than others by ſo much ſuch a one (if he periſh) will finde hell the hotter: theſe adde to his ſinne, and the remembrance of his ſin in hell thus accented will adde to his torment. None will have ſuch a ſad parting from Chriſt, as thoſe who went halfe-way with him, and then left him. 2.

Therefore (I beſeech you) look to your armour. *David* would not fight in armour, he had not tried though it was a Kings; perhaps ſome thought him too nice. What? is not the Kings armour good enough for *David*? Thus many will ſay, Art thou ſo curious and preciſe? ſuch a great man doth thus and thus, and hopes to come to heaven at laſt, and dareſt not thou venture thy ſoul in his armour? No, Chriſtian, follow not the example of the greateſt on earth; 'tis thy own ſoul thou ventureſt in battel, therefore thou canſt not be too choice of thy armour. Bring thy heart to the Word, as the only touch-ſtone of thy grace and furniture; the Word (I told you) is *the Tower of David*, from whence thy armour muſt be fetch't, if thou canſt finde this Tower-ſtamp on it, then 'tis of God, elſe not. Try it therefore by this one Scripture-ſtamp. Thoſe weapons are mighty, which God gives his Saints to fight his battels withal, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.* The ſword of the Spirit hath its point and edge, whereby it makes its way into its heart and conſcience, through the impenitency of the one, and ſtupidity of the other, (wherewith Satan, as with buffe and coat of male, armes the ſinner againſt God) and there cuts and flaſhes, kills and mortifies luſt in its own Caſtle, where Satan thinks himſelf impregnable. The Breaſt-plate which is of God, doth not bend and break at every pat of

temptation, but is of such a divine temperament, that it repels Satans motions with scorne on Satans teeth. Should such a one as I sin, as *Nehemiah* in another case? and such are all the rest. Now try whether your weapons be mighty or weak: what can you do or suffer more for God, than an hypocrite that is clad in fleshly Armour? I'le tell you what the world saith, and if you be Christians, clear your selves, and wipe off that dirt which they throw upon your glistering Armour: they say, These Professours indeed have God more in their talk than we, they are oftner in the Mount of duty than we, but when they come down into their shops, relations and worldly employments, then the best of them all is but like one of us; they can throw the Tables of Gods Commandments out of their hands as well as we, come from a Sermon, and be as covetous and griping, as peevish and passionate as the worst; they shew as little love to Christ as others, when it is matter of cost, as to relieve a poor Saint, or maintain the Gospel, you may get more from a stranger, an enemy, than from a professing brother. O Christians, either vindicate the Name of Christ, whose Ensign you seem to march after, or throw away your seeming Armour, by which you have drawn the eyes of the world upon you. If you will not, Christ himself will cashiere you, and that with shame enough ere long. Never call that Armour of God, which defends thee not against the power of Satan. Take therefore the several Pieces of your Armour, and try them, as the souldier before he fights, will set his helmet or head-piece, as a mark at which he lets flie a brace of bullets, and as he findes them so will weare them or leave them; but be sure as thou shooteſt Scripture-bullets. Thou boasteſt of a breast-plate of righteousnesse, ask thy soul, Didst thou ever in thy life perform a duty to please God, and not to accommodate thy self? Thou hast prayed often against thy sinne, a great noise of these pieces have been heard coming from thee by others, as if there were some hot fight between thee and thy corruption, but canst thou indeed shew one sin that thou hast slain by all thy praying? *Joseph* was alive, though his coat was brought bloody to *Jacob*, and so may thy sin be for all thy mortified look in duty, and outcry thou makeſt against them. If thou wouldeſt thus try every piece, thy credulous heart would not so easily be cheated with Satans false ware.

But

But is all Armour that is of God thus mighty? we read of weak grace, little faith, how can this then be a trial of our Armour, whether of God or not? *Object.*

I answer, the weakness of grace is in respect of stronger grace, but that weak grace is strong and mighty in comparison of counterfeit grace: Now I do not bid thee try the truth of thy grace by such a power as is peculiar to stronger grace, but by that power which will distinguish it from false; true grace, when weakest, is stronger than false when strongest. There is a principle of divine life in it, which the other hath not; Now life, as it gives excellency (a flea or fly by reason of its life is more excellent than the Sun in all its glory) so it gives strength. The slow motion of a living man (though so feeble that he cannot go a furlong in a day) yet coming from life, imports more strength than is in a ship, which (though it sails swiftly) hath its motion from without: Thus possibly an hypocrite may exceed the true Christian in the bulk and out-side of a duty, yet because his strength is not from life, but from some winde and tide abroad that carries him, and the Christians is from an inward principle, therefore the Christians weakness is stronger than the hypocrite in his greatest enlargements. I shall name but two acts of grace when weakest, whereby the Christian exceeds the hypocrite in all his best array. You will say, then grace is at a weak stay indeed, when the Christian is perswaded to commit a sin, a great sin, such a one as possibly a carnal person would not have it said of him for a great matter, so low may the tide of grace fall, yet true grace at such an ebbe will appear of greater strength and force than the other. *Answ.*

First, this principle of grace will never leave till the soul weeps bitterly with *Peter*, that it hath offended so good a God. Speak, O ye hypocrites, can ye shew one tear that ever you shed in earnest for a wrong done to God; Possibly ye may weep to see the bed of sorrow which your sins are making for you in hell, but ye never loved God so well, as to mourne for the injury ye have done the name of God. It is a good gloss *Augustine* hath upon *Esau*'s teares, *Heb.* 12. *Flevit quod perdidit, non quod vendidit.* He wept that he lost the blessing, not that he sold it. Thus we see an excellency of the Saints sorrow above the hypocrites. The Christian by his sorrow shews himself a Conquerour of that

sin, which even now overcame him, while the hypocrite by his pride shews himself a slave to a worse lust, than that he resists. While the Christian commits a sin he hates it; whereas the other loves it while he forbears it.

2. Secondly, when true grace is under the foot of a temptation, yet when it will stir up in the heart a vehement desire of revenge; like a prisoner in his enemies hand, who is thinking and plotting how to get out, and what he will do when out, waiting and longing every moment for his delivery, that he may again take up armes; *O God, remember me*, saith *Samson, this once I pray thee, and strengthen me, that I may be at once avenged on the Philistines, for my two eyes*, Judg. 16. 27. Thus prayes the gracious soul, that God would but spare him a little, and strengthen him but once before he dyes, that he may be avenged on his pride, unbelief, and those sinnes whereby he hath most dishonoured his God; but a false heart is so far from studying revenge, that he rather swells, like the sea, against the Law which banks his lust in, and is angry with God who hath made sin such a leap, that he must hazard his soul if he will have it.

CHAP. IV.

Of the entireness of our furniture, It must be the whole Armour of God.

3. THe third Branch in the Saints furniture is, the entireness thereof, *The whole Armour of God*. The Christians Armour must be compleat, and that in a threefold respect.

SECT. 1.

1. First, he must be armed in every part *cap-a-pe*, soul and body, the powers of the one, and senses of the other, not any part left naked. A dart may fly in at a little hole, (like that which brought a message of death to *Ahab*, through the joynts of his harnesse) and Satan is such an Archer, who can shoot at penny

ny breadth. If all the man be armed, and only the eye left without, Satan can soon shoot his fire-balls of lust in at that loop-hole, which shall set the whole house on flame. *Eve* look't but on the tree, and a poisonous dart struck her to the heart. If the eye be shut, and the ear be open to corrupt communication, Satan will soon wriggle in at this hole; If all the outward senses be guarded, and the heart not kept with all diligence, he will soon by his own thoughts be betrayed into Satans hands. Our enemies are on every side, and so must our armour be, *on the right hand and on the left*, 2 Cor. 6. 7. The Apostle calls sinne ἁμαρτίαν ἐυπερίσατον, an enemy that surrounds us. If there be any part of the line unguarded or weakly provided, there Satan falls on; we see the enemy often enter the City at one side, while he is beat back on the other, for want of care to keep the whole line. Satan divides his temptations into several squadrons, one he employes to assault here, another to storme there. We read of fleshly wickednesse and spiritual wickednesse; while thou repellest Satan tempting thee to fleshly wickednesse, he may be entring thy City at the other gate of spiritual wickednesse. Perhaps thou hast kept thy integrity in the practical part of thy life; but what armour hast thou to defend thy head, thy judgement? If he surprise thee here, corrupting that with some errour, then thou wilt not long hold out in thy practice. He that could not get thee to prophane the Sabbath among Sensualists and Atheists, will under the disguise of such a corrupt principle as Christian liberty prevail. Thus we see what need we have of universal armour, in regard of every part.

SECT. 2.

Secondly, the Christian must be in compleat armour, in regard of the several pieces and weapons, that make up the whole Armour of God. Indeed there is a concatenation of graces, they hang together like links in a chain, stones in an arch, members in the body; prick one vein, and the blood of the whole body may run out at that sluce; neglect one duty, and no other will do us good. The Apostle *Peter*, *in his second Epistle, chap.* 1. *ver.* 5, 6, 7. presseth the Christian to a joynt endeavour, to encrease

creaſe the whole body of grace; indeed, that is health when the whole body thrives. *Adde* (ſaith he) *to your faith vertue*; Faith is the file-leading grace. Well, haſt thou faith, adde vertue: True, faith is of a working ſtirring nature; without good workes it is dead or dying. *Fides pingueſcit operibus, Luther.* 'Tis kept in plight and heart by a holy life, as the fleſh which plaiſters over the frame of mans body, though it receives its heat from the vitals within, yet helps to preſerve the very life of thoſe vitals: thus good works and gracious actions have their life from faith, yet are neceſſary helps to preſerve the life of faith; thus we ſee ſometimes the childe nurſing the Parent that bare it, and therein performes but his duty. Thou art fruitful in good works, yet thou art not out of the devils ſhot, except thou addeſt *to thy vertue knowledge.* This is the candle without which faith cannot ſee to do its work. Art thou going to give an almes? if it be not *oculata charitas*, if charity hath not this eye of knowledge to direct when, how, what, and to whom thou art to give, thou mayeſt at once wrong God, the perſon thou relieveſt, and thy ſelf. Art thou humbling thy ſelf for thy ſinne? for want of knowledge in the tenour of the Goſpel, Satan may play upon thy ignorance, and either perſwade thee thou art not humbled enough, when, God knowes, thou art almoſt quackled with thy teares, and even carried down by the impetuous torrent of thy ſorrow into deſpair, or elſe ſhewing thee thy blubber'd face, may flatter thee into a carnal confidence of thy humiliation. Perhaps thou ſeeſt the name of God diſhonoured in the place where thou liveſt, and thy ſpirit is ſtirred within thee, (as *Pauls* at *Athens*) now if knowledge ſits not in the ſaddle to reine and bridle in thy zeal, thou wilt be ſoon carried over hedge and ditch, till thou falleſt into ſome precipice or other by thy irregular acting. Neither is knowledge enough, except thou bee'ſt arm'd with *Temperance*, which he (I conceive) is that grace, whereby the Chriſtian (as Maſter of his own houſe) ſo orders his affections (like ſervants to reaſon and faith,) that they do not irregularly move, or inordinately laſh out into deſires of, cares for, or joy in the creature-comforts of this life, without which Satan will be too hard for thee. The Hiſtorian tells us, that in one of the famous battels between the *Engliſh* and *French*, that which loſt the *French* the day was a ſhower of

Engliſh

English arrowes, which did so gall their horse, as put the whole Army into disorder, their horse knowing no rancks, did tread down their own men: The affections are but as the horse to the Rider, on which knowledge should be mounted, if Satans barbed arrows light on them, so that thy desires of the creature prove unruly, and justle with thy desires of Christ, thy care to keep thy credit or estate, put thy care to keep a good conscience to disorder, and thy carnal joy in wife and childe trample down, or get before thy joy in the Lord, judge on which side victory is like to fall. Well, suppose thou marchest provided thus far in goodly array towards heaven, while thou art swiming in prosperity; must thou not also prepare for foule way and weather, I mean, an afflicted estate? Satan will line the hedges with a thousand temptations, when thou comest into the narrow lanes of adversity, where thou canst not run from this sort of temptation, as in the Champaigne of prosperity: Possibly, thou that didst escape the snare of an alluring world, mayest be dismounted by the same when it frownes; though temperance kept thee from being drunk with the sweet wines of those pleasures, yet for want of *patience* thou mayest be drunk with the wine of astonishment, which is in afflictions hand: therefore, saith the Apostle, *to temperance, adde patience*; either possesse thy self in patience, or else some raving devil of discontent will possesse thee. An impatient soul in affliction is a bedlam in chains, yea, too like the devil in his chaines, that rageth against God, while he is fettered by him. Well, hast thou patience? an excellent grace indeed, but not enough; thou must be a pious man as well as a patient. Therefore saith the Apostle, *to patience, adde godlinesse*. There is an atheistical stupid patience, and there is a godly Christian patience: Satan numbs the conscience of the one, and no wonder he complains not that feels not; but the Spirit of Christ sweetly calmes the other, not by taking away the sense of paine, but by overcoming it with the sense of his love. Now godlinesse comprehends the whole worship of God, inward and outward. If thou beest never so exact in thy morals, and not a worshipper of God, then thou art an Atheist. If thou doest worship God, and that devoutly, but not by Scripture-rule, thou art an Idolater. If according to the rule, but not in Spirit and truth, then thou art an hypocrite, and so fallest into the devils mouth. Or

if thou doeſt give God one piece of his worſhip, and denyeſt another, ſtill Satan comes to his market. *Prov.* 28. 9. *He that turneth back his eare from hearing the Law, his prayer is an abomination to the Lord.* Yet (Chriſtian) all thy Armour is not on. Thy godlineſſe indeed would ſuffice, wert thou to live in a world by thy ſelfe, or hadſt nothing to do but immediate communion with God; But (Chriſtian) thou muſt not alwayes dwell on this mount of immediate worſhip, and when thou deſcendeſt, thou haſt many brethren and ſervants to thy Father, who live with thee in the ſame family; and thou muſt comport thy ſelf becomingly, or elſe thy Father will be angry. Firſt, thou haſt brethren, heires of the ſame promiſe with thee, therefore you muſt adde to godlineſſe *brotherly kindneſſe*. If Satan can ſet you at odds, he gives a deep wound to your godlineſſe. You will hardly joyne hearts in a duty, that cannot joyne hands in love. Secondly, there are not only brethren, but ſervants, a multitude of profane carnal ones, who though they never had the names of ſons and daughters, yet retain to Gods family, and thy heavenly Father will have thee walk unblameably, yea, winningly to thoſe that are without, which that thou mayeſt do, thou muſt adde to brotherly-kindneſſe *charity*; by which grace thou ſhalt be willing to do good to the worſt of men; when they curſe thee, thou muſt pray for them, yea, pray for no leſſe than a Chriſt, a heaven for them. *Father, forgive them*, ſaid Chriſt, while they were raking in his ſide for his heart-blood. And truly, I am perſwaded the want of this laſt piece of armour, hath given Satan great advantage in theſe our times. We are ſo afraid our charity ſhould be too broad, whereas in this ſenſe, if it be not as wide as the world, it is too ſtrait for the command which bids us *do good to all*. May not we Miniſters be charged with the want of this? when the ſtraine of our preaching is ſolely directed to the Saints; and no paines taken in reſcuing poor captived ſoules, yet uncall'd, out of the devils clutches, who may hale them to hell without any diſturbance, while we are comforting the Saints, and preaching their priviledges; but in the mean time let the ignorant be ignorant ſtill, and the profane profane ſtill, for want of a compaſſionate charity to their ſouls, which would excite us to the reproving and exhorting of them, that they might alſo be brought in to the

way

way of life, as well as the Saints encouraged, who are walking therein. We are ſtewards to provide bread for the Lords houſe; the greateſt part of our hearers cannot, muſt not have the childrens bread, and ſhall we therefore give them no portion at all? Chriſts charity pitied the multitude, to whom in his publike preaching he made ſpecial application, as in that famous Sermon, moſt part of which is ſpent in rowſing up the ſleepy conſciences of the hypocritical Phariſees, by thoſe thunderclaps of woes and curſes, ſo often denounced againſt them, *Mat.* 23. Again, how great advantage hath Satan from the want of this charity in our familyes? Is it not obſerv'd, how little care is taken by profeſſing Governours of ſuch Societies, for the inſtructing their youth? Nay, 'tis a principle which ſome have drunk in, that 'tis not their duty. O where is their charity in the mean time, when they can ſee Satan come within their own walls, and let him drive a childe, a ſervant in their ignorance and profaneneſſe to hell, and not ſo much as ſally out upon this enemy by a word of reproof or inſtruction, to reſcue theſe ſilly ſouls out of the murtherers hand? We muſt leave them to their liberty forſooth, and that is as faire play as we can give the devil; give but corrupt nature enough of this rope, and it will ſoon ſtrangle the very principles of God and Religion in their tender yeares.

SECT 3.

Thirdly, the entireneſſe of the Saints armour may be taken not only for every part and piece of the Saints furniture, but for the compleatneſſe and perfection of every piece. As the Chriſtian is to endeavour after every grace, ſo is he to preſſe after the advance and increaſe of every grace, even to perfection it ſelfe; as he is to adde to his faith vertue, ſo he is to adde faith to faith; he is ever to be compleating of his grace. It is that which is frequently preſt upon believers, *Mat.* 5. 48. *Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. And purifie your ſelves, as God is pure.* Where we have an exact copy ſet, not as if we could equallize that purity and perfection which is in God, but to make us ſtrive the more, when we ſhall ſee how infinitely 3.

ſhort we fall of our copy, when we write the faireſt hand. So *James* 1. 3. *Let patience have its perfect work, that you may be entire, wanting nothing*, or wanting in nothing. Thou who makeſt a hard ſhift to carry a little burden with thy little patience, wouldeſt ſink under a greater, therefore there is need that patience ſhould be ever perfecting, leſt at laſt we meet a burden too heavy for our weak ſhoulders: Take a few reaſons why the Chriſtian ſhould thus be compleating of his grace.

1. Firſt, becauſe grace is ſubject to decayes, and therefore ever needs compleating, as in an Army eſpecially which often engageth in battel, their armes are batter'd and broken, one man hath his helmet bent, another his ſword gap't, a third his piſtol unfix't; and therefore recruits are ever neceſſary. In one temptation the Chriſtian hath his helmet of hope beaten off his head, in another his patience hard put to it. The Chriſtian had need have an Armourers ſhop at hand to make up his loſſe, and that ſpeedily, for Satan is moſt like to fall on, when the Chriſtian is leaſt prepared to receive his charge; *Simon, Simon, Satan hath deſired to ſift you*; he knew they were at that time weakly provided, (Chriſt their Captain now to be taken from the head of their troop, diſcontents among themſelves, ſtriving who ſhould be greateſt, and their recruits of ſtronger grace, which the Spirit was to bring, not yet come.) Now he hath a deſign to ſurpriſe them: and therefore Chriſt carefully to prevent him, promiſeth ſpeedily to diſpatch his Spirit for their ſupply, and in the mean time ſends them to *Jeruſalem*, to ſtand as it were in a body in their joynt ſupplications, upon their guard, while he comes to their relief, ſhewing us in the weakneſſe of our graces what to do, and whither to go for ſupply. Acts 1. 4.

2. Secondly, becauſe Satan is compleating his skill and wrath. 'Tis not for nought that he is call'd the old Serpent, ſubtile by nature, but more by experience; wrathful by nature, yet every day more and more enraged; like a bull, the longer he is baited, the more fury he ſhewes. And therefore we who are to grapple with him, now his time is ſo ſhort, had need come well appointed into the field.

3. Thirdly, it is the end of all Gods diſpenſations, to compleat his Saints in their graces and comforts. Wherefore doth he lop and prune by afflictions; but to *purge, that they may bring forth* Joh. 15. 2.

more

more fruit (that is fuller, and fairer?) *Tribulation works patience*; 'Tis Gods appointment for that end: *It works*, that is, it encreaseth the Saints patience, it enrageth indeed the wicked, but meekens the Saints. 'Tis his design in the Gospel preached to carry on his Saints, *from faith to faith*, *Rom.* 1. 17. And accordingly he hath furnished his Church with instruments, and those with gifts, *for the perfecting of the Saints, and for the edifying of the body of Christ*, Ephes. 4. 14. Wherefore doth the Scaffold stand, and the Workman on it, if the building go not up? For us not to advance under such means, is to make void the Counsel of God: Therefore the Apostle blames the Christian Jewes, *Heb.* 5. 12. for their non-proficiency in the School of Christ. *When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the Oracles of God.* Rom. 15. 3.

O how few are there who endeavour thus to promove in their spiritual state, and labour to perfect what is yet lacking in their knowledge, patience, and the rest. First, tell some of adding faith to faith, one degree of grace to another, and you shall finde they have more minde to joyne house to house, and lay field to field; their souls are athirst, ever gaping for more, but of what? not of Christ, or Heaven: It is earth, earth they never think they have enough of, till death comes and stops their mouth with a shovel-full, digg'd out of their own grave. What a tormenting life must they needs have, who are alwayes crying for more weight, and yet cannot presse their covetous desires to death? O Sirs, the only way, (if men would beleeve it) to quench this thirst to the creature, were to enkindle another after Christ and Heaven. Get but a large heart vehemently thirsting after these, and the other will die alone. As the Fevourish thirst doth when nature comes to her temper. Secondly, others labour not thus to perfect grace, because they have a conceit they are perfect already, and upon this fancy throw away praying, hearing, and all other Ordinances, as strings for those babes in grace, to be carried by, who are not arrived to their high attainments. O what fooles does pride make men! Truly Heaven were no such desirable place, if we should be no more perfect, than thus: a sort of people that are too high for this world, and too low for another. The way by which God cures this phrensie of pride, we *Use.* 1.

we have in these days seen to be something like that of *Nebuchadnezzar*, To give them a heart of a beast, (I mean) for a time, suffer them to fall into beastly practices, by which he shewes them how far they are from that perfection they dreamed of so vainly. Thirdly, others who have true grace, and desire the advancement of it, yet are discouraged in their endeavour for more, from too deep a sense of their present penury. Bid some such labour to get more power of corruption, more faith on, and love to God, that they may be able to do the Will of God chearfully, and suffer it in the greatest afflictions patiently, yea, thankfully; and they will never beleeve, that they whose faith is so weak, love so chill, and stock so little in hand, should ever attain to any thing like such a pitch: You may as well perswade a beggar with one poor penny in his purse, that if he will go and trade with that, he shall come to be Lord *Major* of *London* before he dye: But why, poor hearts, should you thus despise the day of small things? Do you not see a little grain of mustard-seed spread into a tree, and weak grace compar'd to it for its growth at last as well as littleness at first? Darest thou say thou hast no grace at all? If thou hast but any, (though the least that ever any had to begin with) I dare tell thee, that he hath done more for thee in that, than he should in making that which is now so weak, as perfect as the Saints grace is now in heaven. First, he hath done more, considering it as an act of Power. There is a greater gulfe between no grace & grace, than between weak grace and strong, between a *Chaos* and nothing, than between a *Chaos* and this beautiful frame of heaven and earth. The first dayes work of both Creations is the greatest. Secondly, consider it as an act of grace, it is greater mercy to give the first grace of conversion, than to crown that with glory. It is more grace and condescent in a Prince to marry a poor Damosel, than having married her to cloth her like a Prince; he was free to do the first or not, but his relation to her pleads strongly for the other. God might have chose whether he would have given thee grace or no, but having done this, thy relation to him and his Covenant also do oblige him, to adde more and more till he hath fitted thee as a Bride for himselfe in glory.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the use of our spiritual Armour, or the exercise of grace.

THe fourth and last branch in the Saints furniture is, the use they are to make thereof ἐνδύσασθε τὴν πανοπλίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ: *Put on the whole Armour of God.* Briefly what is this duty, put on? These being Saints, (many of them at least) he writes to, 'tis not only putting on by Conversion, what some of them might not yet have; but also, he means they should exercise what they have. It is one thing to have armour in the house, and another thing to have it buckled on: to have grace in the principle, and grace in the act; so that the instruction will be, 4.

It is not enough to have grace, but this grace must be kept in exercise. The Christians Armour is made to be worne; no laying down, or putting off our Armour, till we have done our warfare, and finished our course. Our Armour, and our garment of flesh go off together; then indeed will be no need of watch and ward, shield or helmet. Those military duties and field-graces, (as I may call faith, hope, and the rest) they shall be honourably discharged. In heaven we shall appear, not in armour, but in robes of glory; but here they are to be worne night and day: we must walk, work, and sleep in them, or else we are not true souldiers of Christ: this *Paul* professeth to endeavour, *Acts* 24. 16. *Herein do I exercise my selfe, to have alwayes a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.* Here we have this holy man at his armes, training and exercising himselfe in his postures, like some souldier by himselfe handling his pike, and inuring himselfe before the battel. Now the Reason of this is, *Doct.*

SECT. 1.

First, Christ commands us to have our Armour on, our grace in 1.

in exercise, *Luke* 12. 35. *Let your loynes be girded about, and your lights burning.* Christ speaks, either in a martial phrase as to souldiers, or in a domestick as to servants: If as to souldiers, then let your loynes be girded, and your lights burning, is, that we should be ready for a march, having our Armour on, (for the belt goes over all,) and our match light, ready to give fire at the first alarm of a temptation. If as to servants, which seems more natural, then he bids us (as our Master that is gone abroad) not through sloth or sleep put off our clothes, and put out our lights, but stand ready to open when he shall come, though at midnight. 'Tis not fit the Master should stand at the door knocking, and the servant within sleeping; indeed there is no duty the Christian hath in charge, but implies this daily exercise; *Pray*, but how? *without ceasing*: *Rejoyce*, but when? *evermore*: *Give thanks*, for what? *in every thing*. The shield of faith, and helmet of hope, we must hold them to the end. The summe of all which is, that we should walk in the constant exercise of these duties and graces. Where the souldier is plac't, there he stands, and must neither stir nor sleep, till he be brought off. When Christ comes, that soul shall only have his blessing, whom *he findes so doing*.

1 Thes. 5. 16, 17.

1 Pet. 1. 13.

2. Secondly, Satans advantage is great when grace is not in exercise. When the devil found Christ so ready to receive his charge, and repel his temptation, he soon had enough, it is said, *He departed for a season*, as if in his shameful retreat he had comforted himself with hopes of surprising Christ unawares, at another season more advantagious to his designe; and we finde him coming again, in the most likely time indeed to have attained his end, had his enemy been man, and not God. Now if this bold fiend did thus watch and observe Christ from time to time, doth it not behove thee to look about thee, lest he take thy grace at one time or other napping? what he misseth now by thy watchfulnesse, he may gain anon by thy negligence. Indeed he hopes thou wilt be tired out with continual duty: Surely saith Satan, (when he sees the Christian up, and fervent in duty) this will not hold long. When he findes him tender of conscience, and scrupulous of occasions to sin, This is but for a while, ere long I shall have him unbend his bowe, and unbuckle his Armour, and then have at him. Satan knows what orders thou

Luke 4. 13.

thou keepeſt in thy houſe and cloſet, and though he hath not a key to thy heart, yet he can ſtand in the next room to it, and lightly hear what is whiſpered there. He hunts the Chriſtian by the ſent of his own feet, and if once he doth but ſmell which way thy heart enclines, he knowes how to take the hint; if but one door be unbolted, one work unmann'd, one grace of its carriage, here is advantage enough.

Thirdly, becauſe it is ſo awky a buſineſſe, and hard a work, to recover the activity of grace once loſt, and to revive a duty in diſuſe: *I have put off my Coat*, ſaith the Spouſe, *Cant.* 5. 3. She had given way to a lazy diſtemper, was laid upon her bed of ſloth, and how is it to raiſe her? her beloved is at the doore, beſeeching her by all the names of love, which might bring to her remembrance the near relation between them: *My Siſter, my Love, my Dove, open to me*, and yet ſhe riſeth not, he tells her, *his locks are fill'd with the drops of the night*; yet ſhe ſtirs not. What is the matter? her coat was off, and ſhe is loath to put it on; ſhe had given way to her ſloth, and now ſhe knows not how to ſhake it off, ſhe could have been glad to have her Beloveds company, if himſelf would have opened the door; and he deſired as much hers, if ſhe would riſe to let him in; and upon theſe termes they part. The longer a ſoul hath neglected duty, the more ado there is to get it taken up: partly through ſhame, the ſoul having played the truant, now knows not how to look God on the face; and partly from the difficulty of the work, being double to what another findes, that walks in the exerciſe of his grace; here is all out of order. It requires more time and pains for him to tune his Inſtrument, than for another to play the leſſon. He goes to duty as to a new work, as a Scholar that hath not look't on his book ſome while, his leſſon is almoſt out of his head, whereas another that was but even now conning it over, hath it *ad unguem*. Perhaps 'tis an affliction thou art called to bear, and thy patience unexerciſed, little or no thoughts thou haſt had for ſuch a time; (while thou wert friſking in a full paſture,) and now thou kickeſt and flingeſt, even *as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke*, Jer. 31. 18. whereas another goes meekly and patiently under the like croſſe, becauſe he had been ſtirring up his patience, and fitting the yoke to his neck. You know what a confuſion there is in a Towne,

3.

at some sudden alarm in the dead of the night, the enemy at the gates, and they asleep within, O what a cry is there heard! one wants his clothes, another his sword, a third knows not what to do for powder; thus in a fright they run up and down, which would not be, if the enemy did find them upon their guard, orderly waiting for his approach; such a hubbub there is in a soul that keeps not his armour on, this piece and that will be to seek when he should use it.

4. Fourthly, we must keep grace in exercise in respect of others: our fellow-souldiers. *Paul* had this in his eye when he was exercising himself to keep a good conscience, that he might not be a scandal to others. The Cowardise of one may make others run; the ignorance of one souldier that hath not skill to handle his armes, may do mischief to his fellow-souldiers about him; some have shot their friends for their enemies; the unwise walking of one Professour makes many other fare the worse. But say, thou doest not fall so far as to become a scandal, yet thou canst not be so helpful to thy fellow-brethren as thou shouldest; God commanded the *Reubenites* and *Gadites* to go before their brethren ready armed, untill the land was conquered: Thus, Christian, thou art to be helpful to thy fellow-brethren, who have not (it may be) that settlement of Peace in their spirit as thy self, not that measure of grace or comfort; Thou art to help such weak ones, and go before them (as it were) arm'd for their defence; now if thy grace be not exercised, thou art so far unserviceable to thy weak brother. Perhaps thou art a Master or a Parent who hast a family under thy wing, they fare as thou thrivest; if thy heart be in a holy frame they fare the better in the duties thou performest, if thy heart be dead and down, they are losers by the hand. So that as the Nurse eats the more for the Babes sake she suckles, so shouldest thou for their sake, who are under thy tuition, be more careful to exercise thy own grace, and cherish it.

SECT. 2.

Object. O but (may some say) this is hard work indeed, our Armour never off, our grace alwayes in exercise. Did God ever mean Religion

Religion ſhould be ſuch a toilſome buſineſſe as this would make it?

Thou ſpeakeſt like one of the fooliſh world, and ſheweſt thy ſelf a meer ſtranger to the Chriſtians life that ſpeakeſt thus: a burden to exerciſe grace? why? it is no burden to exerciſe the acts of nature, to eat, to drink, to walk, all delightful to us in our right temper, if any of theſe be otherwiſe, nature is oppreſt, as if ſtuff't, then difficult to breath, if ſick, then the meat offenſive we eate; ſo take a Saint in his right temper, 'tis his joy to be employed in the exerciſe of his grace in this or that duty, *Pſal.* 122. 1. *I was glad when they ſaid unto me, Let us go into the houſe of the Lord.* His heart leap't at the motion. When any occaſion diverts him from communion with God, though he likes it never ſo well, yet it is unwelcome and unpleaſing to him, as you who are uſed to be in your ſhops from morning to night, how tedious is it for you to be abroad ſome dayes, though among good friends, becauſe you are not where your work and calling lies? A Chriſtian in duty is one in his calling, as it were in his ſhop where he ſhould be; yea, where he would be, and therefore far from being tedious. Religion is burdenſome to none, as to thoſe who are infrequent in the exerciſe of it. Uſe makes heavy things light, we hardly feel the weight of our clothes, becauſe fitted to us, and worne daily by us, whereas the ſame weight on our ſhoulder would trouble us: thus the grievouſneſſe of religious duties to carnal ones, is taken away in the Saints, partly by the fitneſſe of them to the Saints principles, as alſo by their daily exerciſe in them. The diſciples, when newly entered into the wayes of Chriſt, could not pray much or faſt long; the bottles were new, and that wine too ſtrong, but by that time they had walk't a few yeares, they grew mighty in both; doeſt thou complain that heaven-way is rugged? be the oftner walking in it, and that will make it ſmooth. *Anſw.*

But ſecondly, were this conſtant exerciſe of grace more troubleſome to the fleſh, (which is the only complainer) the ſweet advantage that accrues by this to the Chriſtian, will abundantly recompence all his labour and pains. 2.

Firſt, the exerciſe of thy grace will encreaſe thy grace; *The diligent hand makes rich.* A provident man counts that loſt which might have been got, not only when his money is ſtole out of 1.

his cheſt, but when it lies there unimproved. Such a commodity (ſaith the Tradeſman) if I had bought with that money in my bags, would have brought me in ſo much gaine, which is now loſt; ſo the Chriſtian may ſay, My dawning knowledge, had I followed on to know the Lord, might have ſpread to broad day; *I have more underſtanding*, ſaith *David*, *than all my teachers*. How came he by it? he'll tell you in the next words, *for thy teſtimonies are my meditation.* He was more in the exerciſe of duty and grace. The beſt wits are not alwayes the greateſt Scholars, becauſe their ſtudy is not ſuitable to their parts; neither alwayes proves he the richeſt man, that ſets up with the ſtreateſt ſtock. A little grace well-husbanded by daily exerciſe will encreaſe, when greater neglected ſhall decay.

Pſ. 119. 99.

2. Secondly, as exerciſe encreaſeth, ſo it evidenceth grace. Would a man know whether he be lame or no, let him riſe, he'll be ſooner ſatisfied by one turn in a room, than by a long diſpute, and he ſit ſtill. Wouldeſt thou know whether thou loveſt God? be frequent in exerting acts of love; the more the fire is blown up, the ſooner 'tis ſeen, and ſo of all other graces. Sometimes the ſoul is queſtioning whether it hath any patience; any faith; till God comes and puts him into an afflicted eſtate, (where he muſt either exerciſe this grace or periſh) and then it appeares like one that thinks he cannot ſwim, yet being thrown into the river, then uniting all his ſtrength: he makes a ſhift to ſwim to land, and ſees what he can do. How oft have we heard Chriſtians ſay, I thought I could never have endured ſuch a pain, truſted God in ſuch a ſtrait, but now God hath taught me what he can do for me, what he hath wrought in me? and this thou mighteſt have known before, if thou wouldeſt have oftner ſtirred up and exerciſed thy grace.

3. Thirdly, exerciſe of grace doth invite God to communicate himſelf to ſuch a ſoul. God ſets the Chriſtian at work, and then meets him in it. *Up and be doing, and the Lord be with you.* He ſets a ſoul a reading as the Eunuch, and then joynes to his chariot a praying, and then comes the meſſenger from heaven, *O Daniel greatly beloved.* The Spouſe who loſt her Beloved *on her bed*, findes him as ſhe comes *from the Sermon*, (*Cant.* 3. 4. *It was but a little that I paſſed from them, but I found him whom my ſoul loved.*

SECT.

SECT. 3.

This falls heavy on their heads, who are so far from exercising grace, that they walk in the exercise of their lusts, their hearts are like a glasse-house, the fire is never out, the shop-windowes never shut, they are alwayes at work, hammering some wicked project or other, upon the anvil of their hearts; there are some who give scope to their lusts, what their wretched hearts will, they shall have; they cocker their lusts as some their children, deny them nothing, who (as it is recorded of *David* to *Adonijah*) do not so much as say to their souls, Why doest thou so? why art thou so proud, so covetous, so prophane? They spend their dayes in making provision for these guests: as at some Innes, the house never cooles, but as one guest goes out, another comes in, as one lust is served, another is calling for attendance; as some exercise grace more than others, so there are greater traders in sin, that set more a work than others, and return more wrath in a day, than others in a moneth; Happy are such (in comparison of these) who are chain'd up by Gods restraint upon their outward man or inward, that they cannot drive on so furiously as these, who by health of body, power and greatnesse in place, riches and treasures in their coffers, numbnesse and dedolency in their consciences, are hurried on to fill up the measure of their sins. We reade of the Assyrian, that he enlarged *his heart as hell*, stretching out his desires as men do their bagges that are thrack't full with money to hold more, *Hab.* 2. 5. Thus the adulterer, as if his body were not quick enough to execute the commands of his lust, stirs it up by sending forth his amorous glances, which come home *laden with adultery*, blows up this fire with unchaste sonnets and belly-chear, proper fuel for the devils kitchin; and the malicious man, who that he may lose no time from his lust, is a tearing his neighbour in pieces as he lies on his bed, cannot sleep unlesse some such bloody sacrifice be offered to his ravening lust. O how may this shame the Saints: how oft is your zeal so hot, that you cannot sleep till your hearts have been in heaven, as you are on your beds, and there pacified with the sight of your dear Saviour, and some embraces of love from him? *Use* 1.

Use 2. It reproves those who flout and mock at the Saints, while exercising their graces. None jeer'd as the Saint in his calling. Men may work in their shops, and every one follow his calling as diligently as they please, and no wonder made of this by those that passe by in the streets; but let the Christian be seen at work for God, in the exercise of any duty or grace, and he is hooted at, despised, yea, hated. Few so bad indeed, but seem to like Religion in the notion; they can commend a sermon of holiness like a discourse of God or Christ in the Pulpit, but when these are really set before their eyes, as they sparkle in a Saints conversation, they are very contemptible and hateful to them; this living and walking holinesse bites; and though they liked the Preachers Art, in painting forth the same in his discourse, yet now they run from them, and spit at them; this exercise of grace offends the prophane heart, and stirs up the enmity that lyes within: As *Michal* she could not but flout *David* to see him dancing before the Ark. He that commended the Preacher for making a learned discourse of zeal, will raise on a Saint, expressing an act of zeal in his place and calling; now grace comes too near him. A naughty heart must stand at some distance from holinesse, that the beams thereof may not beat too strongly on his conscience, and so he likes it. Thus the Pharisees, the Prophets of old, these were holy men in their account, and they can lavish out their money on their Tombes, in honour of them: but Christ, (who was more worth than all of them) he is scorn'd & hated: what's the mystery of this? the reason was, these Prophets are off the stage, & Christ on. *Pascitur in vivis livor, post fata quiescit.*

Use 3. Try by this whether you have grace or no, dost thou walk in the exercise of thy grace? He that hath clothes, surely will wear them, and not be seen naked; men talk of their faith, repentance, love to God; these are precious graces, but why do they not let us see these walking abroad in their daily conversation? surely if such guests were in thy soul, they would look out sometimes at the window, and be seen abroad in this duty, and that holy action; grace is of a stirring nature, and not such a dead thing, (like an image) which you may lock up in a chest, and none shall know what God you worship; no, grace will shew it selfe, it will walk with you into all places and companies, it will buy with you, and sell for you, it will have a hand in all your enterprizes,

enterprizes, it will comfort you when you are sincere and faithful for God, and it will complaine and chide you when you are otherwise; go to, stop its mouth, and heaven shall hear its voice, it will groan, mourne and strive, even as a living man when you would smother him. I'le as soon believe the man to be alive, that lyes peaceably as he is nail'd up in his Coffin, without strife or bustle, as that thou hast grace, and never exercise it in any act of spiritual life. What man! hast thou grace, and carried so peaceably, as a fool to the stocks, by thy lust? Why hang'st thou there nail'd to thy lust? if thou hast grace, come down and we will believe it, but if thou beest such a tame slave, as to sit still under the command of lust, thou deceivest thy selfe: Hast thou grace, and shew none of it in the condition thou art plac't in? May be thou art rich; doest thou shew thy humility towards those that are beneath thee? doest thou shew a heavenly mind breathing after heaven more than earth? It may be thy heart is puff't with thy estate, that thou lookest on the poor as creatures of some lower *species* than thy self, and disdainest them, and as for heaven thou thinkest not of it. Like that wicked Prince, that said, *He would lose his part in Paradise rather than in* Paris. Art thou poor, why doest not exercise grace in that condition? Art thou contented, diligent? may be in stead of contentation thou repinest, canst not see a faire lace on thy rich brothers cloth, but grudgest it in stead of concurring with Providence by diligence to supply thy wants, thou art ready to break through the hedge into thy neighbours fat pasture, thus serving thy own turne by a sin, rather than waiting for Gods blessing on thy honest diligence; if so, be not angry we call thee by thy right name, or at least question whether we may stile thee Christian, whose carriage is so crosse to that sacred name, which is too holy to be written on a rotten post.

Be exhorted, O ye Saints of God, to walk in the exercise of grace. It is the Ministers duty with the continual breath of exhortation, and if need be, reproof, to keep this heavenly fire clean on the Saints Altar. *Peter* saw it necessary to have the bellowes alwayes in his hands, 2 *Pet.* 1. 12. *I will not be negligent to put you alwayes in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth*; (that shall not take him *Use 4.*

him off) as long as he is in this Tabernacle, he saith he will stir them up, and be putting *them in remembrance*, *v.*13. There is a sleepy disease we are subject to in this life; Christ though he had roused up his disciples twice, yet takes them napping the third time. Either exercise thy grace, or Satan will act thy corruption, as one bucket goes down, the other riseth; there is a body of sin within, which like a malignant party watcheth for such a time to step into the saddle, and 'tis easier to keep them down than to pull them down. Thy time is short, and thy way long, thou hadst best put on, lest thou meanest to be overtaken with night, before thou getteſt within sight of thy Fathers house. How uncomfortable 'tis for a traveller in Heaven-road (above all other) to go potching in the dark, many can with aking hearts tell thee. And what hast thou here to minde like this? Are they worldly cares and pleasures? Is it wisdome to lay out so much cost on thy tenement, which thou art leaving, and forget what thou must carry with thee? Before the fruit of these be ripe which thou art now planting, thy self may be rotting in the grave. *Time is short*, saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. κάιρὸς συνεσταλμένος. The world is near its Port, and therefore God hath contracted the sailes of mans life but a while, and there will not be a point to chuse, whether we had wives or not, riches or not, but there will be a vast difference between those that had grace, and those that had not; yea, between those that did drive a quick trade in the exercise thereof, and those that were more remisse; the one shall have an *abundant entrance into glory*, 2 Pet. 1. 11. while the other shall suffer losse in much of his lading, which shall be cast over-board as merchandize that will bear no price in that heavenly Countrey; yea, while thou art here others shall fare the better by thy lively graces. Thy cheerfulnesse and activity in thy heavenly course, will help others that travel with thee; he is dull indeed that will not put on, when he sees so much metal for God in thee who leadest the way. Yea, thy grace will give a check to the sins of others, who never stand in such awe, as when grace comes forth and sits like a Ruler in the gate, to be seen of all that passe by. The Swearer knows not such Majesty is present, when the Christian is mealy-mouth'd, and so goes on and feares no colours, whose grace had it but her dagger of zeal ready, and courage to draw it forth in

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a wise reproof, would make sin quit the place, and with shame run into its hole. *Job* 29. 8. *The young men saw me and hid themselves, the Princes refrain'd talking, and laid their hand on their mouth.* And doth not God deserve the best service thou canst do him in thy generation? Did he give thee grace to lay it up in a dead stock, and none to be the better? or can you say that he is wanting to you in his love and mercy? are they not ever in exercise for your good? Is the eye of providence ever shut? No, *he slumbers not* that keeps thee, or is it one moment off thee? No, *The eye of the Lord is upon the righteous*; He hath fixed it for ever, and with infinite delight pleaseth himself in the object. When was his eare shut, or his hand, either from receiving thy cries, or supplying thy wants? nay, doth not thy condition take up the thoughts of God, and are they any other than thoughts of peace, which he entertains? A few drops of this oyle will keep the wheel in motion.

That ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

THese words present us with the reason, why the Christian souldier is to be thus compleatly arm'd, *That he may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* The strength of which argument lies in these two particulars.

First, the danger, if unarm'd, the enemy is no mean contemptible one, no lesse than the devil, set out as a cunning Engineer by his wiles and stratagems.

Secondly, the certainty of standing against all his wits and wiles, if we be thus arm'd, That ye may be *able to stand.* As no standing without Armour, so no fear of falling into the fiends hands if arm'd.

To begin with the first, the Saints enemy, the devil described by his wiles μεθοδείας τῦ διαβόλυ, properly the methods of Satan; μεθοδεία of μέθοδος, which signifies, that Art and order one observes in handling a point; we say such a one is methodical; Now because it shews ingenuity and acutenesse of wit so to compose a discourse, therefore it is transferr'd to expresse the subtilty of Satan in laying of his plots and stratagems, in his warlike preparations against the Christian. Indeed, the expert souldier hath his order as well as the Scholar, there is method in forming of an Army, as well as framing an Argument. The Note which lies before us is,

Doct. The devil is a very subtile enemy. The Christian is endangered most by his policy and craft; he is call'd the Old Serpent. The serpent subtile above other creatures, an Old serpent above other serpents; Satan was too crafty for man in his perfection, much more now in his maimed estate, having never recovered that first crack he got in his understanding by the fall of *Adam*. And as man hath lost, so Satan hath gained more and more experience; he lost his wisdome indeed assoon as he became a devil, but ever since he hath increast his craft; though he hath not wisdome enough to do himself good, yet subtilty enough to do others hurt. God shewes us where his strength lies, when he promiseth he will *bruise the head of the Serpent*; his head crush't and he dies presently. Now in handling this Point of Satans subtilty, we shall consider him in his two main designs, and therein shew you his wiles and policies. His first main design is to draw into sin. The second is to accuse, vex and trouble the Saint for sin. First, let us consider the devil as a tempter to sin, and there he shews his wily subtilty in three things.

1. First, in choosing the most advantagious season for tempting.
2. Secondly, in managing his temptations, laying them in such a method and forme, as shews his craft.
3. Thirdly, in pitching on fit instruments for his turn, to carry on his design.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Of Satans ſubtilty to chooſe the moſt advantagious ſeaſons for tempting.

FIrſt, he ſhews his ſubtilty in chooſing the moſt proper and advantagious ſeaſons for tempting. *To every thing there is a ſeaſon, Solomon* ſaith, *Eccleſ.* 3. 1. that is, a nick of time, which taken gives facilitie and ſpeedy diſpatch to a buſineſſe; And therefore the ſame Wiſe man gives this reaſon why man miſcarryes ſo frequently, and is diſappointed in his enterprizes, *becauſe he knows not his time*, Eccleſ. 9. 11. He comes when the bird is flowen. A hundred ſouldiers at one time may turn a battel, ſave an army, when thouſands will not do at another. Satan knows when to make his approaches, when (if at any time) he is moſt likely to be entertained. *As Chriſt* hath *the tongue of the learned to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon* of counſel and comfort, to a doubting drooping ſoul, ſo Satan ſhews his black Art, and helliſh skill, in ſpeaking words of ſeduction and temptation in ſeaſon, and a word in ſeaſon is *a word on its wheeles*. I ſhall give you a view of his ſubtilty in ſpecial ſeaſons, which he chooſeth to tempt in.

The firſt ſeaſon he takes to tempt in is, when newly converted. No ſooner is this childe of grace, the new creature born, but this Dragon poures a flood of temptation after it. He learnt the *Egyptians* but ſome of his own craft, when he taught them that bloody and cruel baptiſme, which they exerciſed upon the Iſraelitiſh babes, in throwing them into the river aſſoon as they were born. The firſt cry of the new creature, gives all the legions of hell an alarm; they are as much troubled at it, as *Herod* and *Jeruſalem* were, when Chriſt was born; and now they ſit in Councel to take away the life of this new born King. The Apoſtles met with more oppoſition and perſecution in their latter dayes, when endued with larger portions of the Spirit, but with temptations from Satan in their former, when young Converts; as you may obſerve in the ſeveral paſſages recorded of 1.

them. Satan knew grace within was but weak, and their supplies promised at the Spirits coming, not landed; and when is an enemy more like to carry the Town than in such a low condition? and therefore he tries them all. Indeed the advantages are so many, that we may wonder how the young Convert escapes with his life; knowledge weak, and so soon led into an errour, especially in divided times, when many wayes are held forth, one saying, Here is Christ; another, There is Christ; and the Christian ready to think every one means honestly, that comes with good words, as a little childe who hath lost his way to his fathers house, is prone to follow any that offer him their conduct. Experience of what he knowes little; and if *Adam* whose knowledge so perfect, yet was soon cheated (being assaulted before he was well warme in his new possessions,) how much more advantage hath Satan of the new Convert? in whom he findes every grace in so great an indisposition to make resistance, both from its own weakneſſe, and the strength of the contrary corruption, (which commonly in such is much unmortified) which makes it act with more difficulty and mixture, as in a fire newly kindled where the smoak is more than the flame, or like beer newly tunn'd which runs thick; so that though there appear more strength of affection in such, that it works over into a greater abundance of duty than in others, yet with more dregs of carnal passions, which Satan knows, and therefore chooseth to stir what he sees troubled already.

2. Secondly, when the Saint is beset with some great affliction, This is as some blind lane or solitary place, fit for this thief to call for his purse in. An expert Captain first labours to make a breach in the wall, and then falls on in storming the City. Satan first got power from God to weaken *Job* in his estate, children, health and other comforts he had, and now tempts him to impatience, and what not? he lets Christ fast fourty dayes before he comes, and than he falls to his work; as an Army stayes till a Castle be pinch't for provision within, and then sends a parley, never more likely to be embraced than in such a strait. A temptation comes strong when the way to relief seems to lie through the sin that Satan is wooing to; when one is poor and Satan comes, What wilt starve rather than step over the hedge and steal for thy supply? this is enough to put flesh and blood to the stand.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, when the Chriſtian is about ſome notable enterprize for Gods glory, then Satan will lie like a Serpent in the way, *an Adder in the path, that biteth his horſe-heels, ſo that his Rider ſhall fall backward.* Thus he ſtood at *Joſhuah*'s right hand *to reſiſt him.* The right hand is the working hand, and his ſtanding there implies his deſire to hinder him in his enterprize. Indeed the devil was never friend to Temple-work, and therefore that work is ſo long a doing. What a handſome excuſe doth he help the Jews unto, *The time is not come:* Gods time was come, but not the devils, and therefore he helps them to this poor ſhift, perverting the ſenſe of Providence as if it were not time, becauſe they were ſo poor, whereas they thrive no better becauſe they went no ſooner about the work, as God tells them plainly. *Paul* and *Barnabas* had a holy deſign in their thoughts, to go viſit the brethren in every City, and ſtrengthen their faith; the devil knew what a blow this might give to his Kingdome, their viſiting might hinder him in this Circuit, and he ſtirs up an unhappy difference between theſe two holy men, who grow ſo hot that they part in this ſtorme, *Acts* 15. 30. There were two remarkable periods of Chriſts life, his *Intrat* and *Exit*, his entrance into his publick Miniſtry at his Baptiſme, and his finiſhing it at his paſſion, and at both we have the devil fiercely encountring him. The more publick thy place, Chriſtian, and the more eminent thy ſervice for God, the more thou muſt look that the devil will have ſome more dangerous deſign or other againſt thee, and therefore if every private ſouldier needs Armour againſt Satans bullets of temptation, then the Commanders and Officers, who ſtand in the front of the Battel, much more. 3.

Ezek. 1. 2, 6, 8.

Fourthly, when he hath the preſence of ſome object to enforce his temptation. Thus he takes *Eve* when ſhe is near the tree, and had it in her eye while he ſhould make the motion, that aſſaulting two Ports at once, it might be the harder for her to hinder the landing of his temptation; and if *Eves* eyes did ſo ſoon affect her heart with an inordinate deſire, then much more now is it eaſie for him by the preſence of the object, to excite and actuate that luſt which lies dormant in the heart. As *Naomi* ſent her daughter to lie at *Boaz* his feet, knowing well, if he endured her there, there were hope he might take her into his bed 4.

at last; If the Christian can let the object come so near, Satan will promise himself his suit may in time be granted. Therefore it should be our care if we would not yield to the sin, not to walk by, or sit at the door of the occasion; Look not on that beauty with a wandring eye, by which thou wouldest not be taken Prisoner; parley not with that in thy thoughts, which thou meanest not to let into thy heart; conversation begets affection: some by this have been brought to marry those, whom at first they thought they could not have liked.

5. Fifthly, after great manifestations of Gods love, then the Tempter comes. Such is the weak constitution of grace, that it can neither well bear smiles or frowns from God without a snare: As one said of our *English* Nation, *Totam nec pationtur libertatem nec servitutem*; It cannot well bear liberty nor bondage in the height: So neither can the soul, if God smile and opens himself a little familiarly to us, then we are prone to grow high and wanton, if he frown, then we sink as much in our faith; thus the one like fair weather and warme gleams, bring up the weeds of corruption; and the other, like sharp frosts, nip and even kill the flowers of grace; the Christian is in danger on both hands, therefore Satan takes this advantage, when the Christian is flush of comfort, even as a cheater, who strikes in with some young heire, when he hath newly received his rents, and never leaves till he hath eased him of his money: thus Satan lies upon the catch, then to inveigle a Saint into one sin or other, which he knows will soon leak out his joy. Had ever any a larger testimony from Heaven than *Peter*, *Matth.* 16. 17. where Christ pronounceth him blessed, and puts a singular honour upon him, making him the Representative for all his Saints. No doubt this favour to *Peter*, stirred up the envious spirit the sooner to fall upon him. If *Josephs* party-coloured coat made the Patriarchs to plot against him their brother, no wonder malice should prompt Satan to shew his spite, where Christ had set such a mark of love and honour; and therefore we finde him soon at *Peters* elbowe, making him his instrument to tempt his Master, who soon espied his cloven foot, and rebukes *Peter* with a *Get thee behinde me Satan.* He that seem'd a Rock even now, through Satans policy, is laid as a stone of offence for Christ to stumble at. So *David*, when he had received such wonderful

mercies

mercies, setled in his throne with the ruine of his enemies, yea, pardoned for his bloody sin, now ready to lay down his head with peace in the dust: Satan chops in to cloud his clear evening, and tempts him to number the people; so ambitious is Satan, then chiefly to throw the Saint into the mire of sin, when his coat is cleanest.

Sixthly, at the houre of death, when the Saint is down and prostrate in his bodily strength, now this coward falls upon him: 'tis the last cast indeed he hath for the game, now or never, overcome him now and ever; as they say of the natural serpent, *Nunquam nisi moriens producitur in longum*: he never is seen at his length till dying: so this mystical serpent never strains his wits and wiles more, then when his time is thus short. The Saint is even stepping into eternity, and now he treads upon his heele, which if he cannot trip up so as to hinder his arrival in heaven, yet at least to bruise it, that he may go with more pain thither. 6.

CHAP. II.

Satans subtilty in managing his temptations, where several stratagems used by him to deceive the Christian, are laid down.

THe second way wherein Satan shews his tempting subtilty, is in those stratagems he useth to deceive the Christian in the act of temptation. 2.

First, he hangs out false colours, and comes up to the Christian in the disguise of a friend, so that the gates are opened to him, and his motions received with applause, before either be discovered, therefore he is said to *transform himself into an Angel of light*, 2 *Cor.* 11.14. Of all plots 'tis most dangerous when he appears in *Samuels* mantle, and silvers his foule tongue with fair language. Thus in point of errour, he corrupts some in their judgments, by commending his notions for precious Gospel-truths, and like a cunning Chapman puts off his old ware, (errours I mean that have layen long upon his hand) only turkening them a little.

after

after the mode of the times, and they go for new light, under the skirt of Christian liberty; he conveys in Libertinisme, by crying up the Spirit; he decries and vilifies the Scripture by magnifying faith: he labours to undermine repentance, and blow up good works; by bewailing the corruption of the Church in its administrations, he draws unstable souls from it, and amuseth them, till at last they fall into a *vertigo*, and can see no Church at all in being. And he prevails no lesse on the hearts and lives of men by this wise, than on their judgments. Under the notion of zeal, he kindles sometimes a dangerous flame of passion and wrath in the heart, which like a rash fire makes the Christians spirit boile over into unchristian desires of, and prayers for revenge where he should forgive; of which we have an instance in the disciples, *Luke* 9.55. where two holy men are desiring that *fire may come down from heaven*. Little did they think from whence they had their coal, that did so heat them, till Christ told them, *Ye know not what Spirit you are of*. Sometimes he pretends pity and natural affection, which in some cases may be good counsel, and all the while he desires to promote cowardise and sinful self-love; whereby the Christian may be brought to flie from his colours, shrink from the truth, or decline some necessary duty of his calling; this his wile Christ soon spied, when he got *Peter* to be his spokesman, saying, *Master, pity thy self*: who stop't his mouth with that sharp rebuke, *Get thee behinde me, Satan*. O what need have we to study the Scriptures, our hearts and Satans wiles, that we may not bid this enemy welcome, and all the while think it's Christ that is our guest.

2. A second policy he useth is to get intelligence of the Saints affairs. This is one great wheele in the Politicians clock, to have Spies in all places, by whom they are acquainted with the counsels and motions of their enemies, and this gives them advantage, as to disappoint their designes, so more safely to compasse their own. 'Tis no hard matter for him to play his game well, that sees his enemies hand. *David* knew how the squares went at Court, *Jonathans* arrowes carried him the newes, and accordingly he removed his quarters, and was too hard for his great enemy *Saul*. Satan is the greatest Intelligencer in the world, he makes it his businesse to enquire into the inclinations, thoughts, affections

affections, purpoſes of the creature, that finding which humour abounds, he may apply himſelf accordingly, which way the ſtream goes, that he may open the paſſage of temptation, and cut the channel to the fall of the creatures affections, and not force it againſt the torrent of nature. Now if we conſider but the piercing apprehenſion of the Angelical nature, how quick he is to take the ſent which way the game goes by a word drop't, the caſt of an eye or ſuch a ſmall matter (ſignal enough to give him the alarm) his experience in heart-anatomy, having inſpected, and (as it were) diſſected ſo many in his long practice, whereby his knowledge is much perfected, as alſo his great diligence to adde to both theſe, being as cloſe a Student as ever, conſidering the Saints, and ſtudying how he may do them a miſchief, as we ſee in *Jobs* caſe, whom he had ſo obſerved that he was able to give an anſwer *ex tempore* to God, what *Jobs* ſtate and preſent poſture was, and what might be the moſt probable means of obtaining his will of him; and beſides all this, the correſpondence that he hath with thoſe in and about the Chriſtian, from whom he learnes much of his ſtate, as *David* by *Huſhai* in *Abſaloms* councel; all theſe conſidered, 'tis almoſt impoſſible for the creature to ſtir out of the cloſet of his heart, but it will be known whether he enclines; ſome corrupt paſſion or other will bewray the ſoul to him, as they did *David* to *Saul*, who told him where he might finde him, *in the wilderneſſe of Engedi.* 1 Sam. 24. 1. Thus will theſe give intelligence to Satan; and ſay, If thou wouldeſt ſurprize ſuch a one, he is gone that way, you ſhall have him in the wood of worldly employments, over head and eares in the deſires and cares of this life, ſee where another ſits under ſuch a bower, delighting himſelf in this child, or that gift, endowment of mind, or the like; lay but the lime-twig there, and you ſhall ſoon have him in it. Now Satan having this intelligence, lets him alone to act his part; he ſure cannot be at a loſſe himſelf, when his ſcholars, (the Jeſuites I mean) have ſuch agility of minde, to wreath and caſt themſelves into any form becoming the perſons they would ſeduce. Is ambition the luſt the heart favours? O the pleaſing projects that he will put ſuch upon! how eaſily having firſt blown them up with vaine hopes; doth he draw them into horrid ſins? Thus *Haman*, that he may have a monopoly of his Princes favour, is hurried into that

bloody plot (fatal at last to himselfe) against the Jewes. Is uncleanneſſe the luſt after which the creatures eye wanders? Now he'll be the Pander, to bring him and his Minion together. Thus he finding *Amnon* ſick of this diſeaſe, ſends *Jonadab a deep-*
2 Sam. 13.3. *pated fellow*, to put this fine device into his head of feigning himſelf ſick, whereby his ſiſter fell into his ſnare.

3. Thirdly, in his gradual approaches to the ſoul. When he comes to tempt, he is modeſt and asks but a little, he knows he may get that at many times, which he ſhould be denied if he ask't all at once. A few are let into a City, when an army coming in a body, would be ſhut out, and therefore that he may beget no ſuſpition, he preſents may be a few general propoſitions, which do not diſcover the depth of his plot; theſe like Scouts go before, while his whole body lies hid as it were in ſome ſwamp at hand. Thus he wrigled into *Eves* boſome, whom he doth not at firſt daſh bid take and eat, no, he is more mannerly than ſo, this would have been ſo hideous, that as the fiſh with ſome ſudden noiſe, by a ſtone caſt into the river, is ſcared from the bait, ſo would ſhe have been affrighted from holding parley with ſuch a one: no, he propounds a queſtion which ſhall make way for this, *Hath God ſaid*? art not miſtaken? could this be his meaning whoſe bounty lets thee eat of the reſt, to deny thee the beſt of all? Thus he digs about and looſens the roots of her faith, and then the tree falls the eaſier the next guſt of temptation. This is a dangerous policy indeed. Many have yielded to go a mile with Satan, that never intended to go two; but when once on the way, have been allured further and further, till at laſt they know not how to leave his company. Thus Satan leads poor creatures down into the depths of ſin by winding ſtaires, that let them not ſee the bottom whither they are going; Firſt he preſents an object that occaſions ſome thoughts, theſe ſet fire on the affections, and theſe fume up into the braine, and cloud the underſtanding, which being thus diſabled, now Satan dares a little more declare himſelfe, and boldly ſolicite the creature to that it would even now have defied. Many who at this day lye in open profaneneſſe, never thought they ſhould have roll'd ſo far from their Profeſſion, but Satan beguiled them, poor ſouls, with their modeſt beginnings. O Chriſtians, give not place to Satan, no not an inch in his firſt motions; he that is a beggar and a modeſt one without

without doors, will command the houſe if let in ; yield at firſt, and thou giveſt away thy ſtrength to reſiſt him in the reſt ; when the hem is worne, the whole garment will ravel out, if that be not mended by timely repentance.

The fourth way, wherein Satan ſhews his ſubtilty in managing his temptations, is in his reſerves. A wiſe Captain hath ever ſome freſh troops at hand to fall in at a pinch, when other are worſted. Stan is ſeldom at a loſſe in this reſpect, when one temptation is beat back, he ſoon hath another to fill up the gap, and make good the line. Thus he tempts Chriſt to diffidence and diſtruſt, by bidding him turne ſtones into bread, as if it were time now to crave for himſelf, being ſo long neglected of his Father, as to faſt fourty dayes, and no ſupplyes heard of ; No ſooner had Chriſt quench't this dart with that, *It is written, Man ſhall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*, but he hath another on the ſtring which he let flye at him, tempting him to preſumption, *v.* 5. *Then the devil taketh and ſets him on a pinacle*, and bids, *Caſt thy ſelfe down headlong, for it is written, He ſhall give his Angels charge over thee, &c.* As if he had ſaid, If thou haſt ſuch confidence on God and his Word, as thou pretendeſt, ſhew it by caſting thy ſelf down, for thou haſt a Word between thee and the ground, if thou dareſt truſt God ; and truely, though Chriſt had his anſwer ready, and was prepared to receive his charge on the right hand and on the left, being ſo compleatly arm'd that no temptation could come amiſſe, yet note we, Satans temptations on Chriſt, were like the Serpents motion on a rock, (of which *Solomon* ſpeaks) that makes no impreſſion, no dint at all, but on us they are as a Serpent on ſand or duſt, that leaves a print, when not in the heart, yet in the fancy, colours that which is next door to it, and ſo the object there is ready to ſlip in, if great care be not obſerv'd, eſpecially when he doth thus change his hand, as when we have reſiſted one way, fall on afreſh another, yea, plant his ſucceeding temptation upon our very reſiſtance in the former. Now it requires ſome readineſſe in our poſtures, and skill at all our weapons to make our defence, like a diſputant, when he is put out of his road, and hath a new queſtion ſtarted, or argument unuſual brought, now he is tryed to purpoſe. And truely this is Satans way when he tempts the Chriſtian to neglect of dutyes of

4. Mat. 4. 4, 5. Prov. 30. 19.

Gods worſhip (from his worldly occaſions, the multitude of them or neceſſity of following them) and this takes not, then he is on the other ſide, and is drawing the Chriſtian to the neglect of his worldly calling, out of a ſeeming zeale to promote his other in the worſhip of God. Or firſt, he comes and labours to dead the heart in duty, but the Chriſtian too watchful for him there, then he is puffing of him up with an opinion of his enlargement in it, and ever he keeps his ſlieſt and moſt ſublimated temptations for the laſt.

5. Fifthly, in his politick retreats you ſhall have an enemy flie as overcome, when it is on a deſign of overcoming; this was *Joſhua*'s wile, by which he catcht the men of *Ai* in a trap, *Joſh.* 8. We read not only of *Satans* being caſt out, but of the *uncleane ſpirits going out*, (voluntarily) yet with a purpoſe to come again, and bring worſe company with him, *Matth.* 12. 43. Satan is not alwayes beat back by the dint and power of conquering grace, but ſometimes he drawes off, and raiſeth his own ſiege, the more handſomely to get the Chriſtian out of his faſtneſſes and trenches, that ſo he may ſnap him on the plaines, whom he cannot come at in his works and Fortifications. Temptations ſend the Saint to his Caſtle, as the ſight of the dog doth the Coney to her Burrough; Now the ſoul walks the rounds, ſtands upon its guard, dares not neglect duty, becauſe the enemy is under its very walls, ſhooting in his temptations continually; but when Satan ſeems to give the ſoul over, and the Chriſtian findes he is not haunted with ſuch motions as formerly, truly now he is prone to remit in his diligence, faile in his duty, and grow either infrequent or formal therein; As the *Romanes*, whoſe valour decayed for want of the *Carthaginian* troops to alarm them; let Satan tempt or not tempt, aſſault or retreat, keep thou in order, ſtand in a fighting poſture, let his flight ſtrengthen thy faith, but not weaken thy care. The *Parthians* do their enemies moſt hurt in their flight, ſhooting their darts as they runne, and ſo may Satan do thee, if thy ſeeming victory makes thee ſecure.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of Satans subtilty, in chooſing inſtruments fit for his turn to carry on his tempting deſign.

THe third particular in which Satan ſhewes his ſubtilty, as a Tempter is in the choice of thoſe inſtruments, whom he uſeth for the carrying on this his deſign, he as the Maſter-workman cuts out the temptation, and gives it the ſhape, but ſometimes he hath his Journeymen to make it up, he knows his work may be carried on better by others, when he appears not above board himſelf. Indeed there is not ſuch a ſutableneſſe between the Angelical nature and mans, as there is between one man and another, and therefore he cannot make his approaches ſo familiarly to us, as man can do to man; and here (as in other things) he is Gods Ape; you know this very reaſon was given, why the *Iſraelites* deſired God might not ſpeak to them, but *Moſes*, and God liked the motion; *They have well ſaid*, ſaith God, *I will raiſe up a Prophet from the midſt of them like unto thee.* Thus Satan, he uſeth the Miniſtry of men like our ſelves, by which as he becomes more familiar, ſo he is leſſe ſuſpected, while *Joab*-like, he gets another to do his errand. Now 'tis not any will ſerve his turne for this employment, he is very choice in his inſtruments he pitcheth on; 'tis not every ſouldier is fit for an Ambaſſage to treat with an enemy, to betray a Town and the like. Satan conſiders who can do his work to his greateſt advantage; and in this he is unlike God, who is not at all choice in his inſtruments, becauſe he needs none, and is able to do as well with one as another; but Satans power being finite, he muſt patch up the defect of the Lions skin with the Foxes. Now the perſons Satan aimes at for his inſtruments are chiefly of four ſorts. 3.

Deut. 18, 17.

Firſt, perſons of place and power. Secondly, perſons of parts and policy. Thirdly, perſons of holineſſe, or at leaſt reputed ſo. Fourthly, perſons of relation and intereſt.

1. Firſt, Satan makes choice of perſons of place and power. Theſe are either in the Common-wealth or Church, if he can he

he will secure the throne and the Pulpit, as the two Forts that command the whole line. First, men of power in the Commonwealth, 'tis his old trick to be tampering with such. A Prince, a Ruler may stand for a thousand; therefore saith *Paul* to *Elymas*, when he would have turned the Deputy from the faith; *O full of all subtilty, thou childe of the devil!* *Acts* 13. 8. As if he had said, you have learn't this of your father the devil, to haunt the Courts of Princes, winde into the favour of great ones. There is a double policy Satan hath, in gaining such to his side. First, none have such advantage to draw others to their way: corrupt the Captain, and 'tis hard if he bring not off his troop with him. When the Princes, men of renown in their tribes, stood up with *Corah*, presently a multitude are drawn into the conspiracy. Let *Jeroboam* set up idolatry, and *Israel* is soon in a snare; it's said the people *willingly walked after his Commandment*, Hos. 5. 11. Secondly, should the sin stay at Court, and the infection go no further, yet the sin of such a one, (though a good man) may cost a whole Kingdom dear. 1 *Chron.* 21. 1. *Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number the people.* He owed *Israel* a spite, and he payes them home in their Kings sin, which drop't in a fearful plague upon their heads. Secondly, such as are in place and office in the Church. No such way to infect the whole town, as to poison the Cistern at which they draw their water; who shall perswade *Ahab* that he may go to *Ramoth-Gilead* and fall? Satan can tell, *I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of his Prophets*, 2 *Kings* 22. 21. How shall the profane be hardened in their sins? let the Preacher sowe pillows under their elbowes, and cry peace, peace, and it's done. How may the worship of God come to be neglected? let *Hophni* and *Phineas* be but scandalous in their lives, and many both good and bad will *abhor the sacrifice of the Lord.*

Num. 16. 2, 19.

2. Secondly, he employeth persons of parts and policy, if any hath more pregnancy of wit, and depth of reason than other, he is the man Satan looks upon for his service: and so far he prevails that very few of this rank are found among Christs disciples, *Not many wise.* Indeed, God will not have his Kingdome, either in the heart or in the world, maintained by carnal policy, 'tis a Gospel-command that we walk in godly simplicity, *sine plicis*; though the Serpent can shrink up into his folds, and appear

what

what he is not, yet it doth not become the Saints to juggle or ſhuffle with God or men; and truely when any of them have made uſe of the Serpents ſubtilty, it hath not followed their hand; *Jacob* got the bleſſing by a wile, but he might have had it cheaper with plain dealing. *Abraham* and *Sarah* both diſſemble to *Abimelech*, God diſcovers their ſin, and reproves them for it by the mouth of an Heathen. *Aſa* out of State-policy joynes league with *Syria*, yea, pawns the veſſels of the Sanctuary, and all for help, and what comes of all this? *Herein thou haſt done fooliſhly*, ſaith God, *from hence forth thou ſhalt have wars*. Sinful policy ſhall not long thrive in the Saints hands well, but Satan will not out of his way, he enquires for the ſubtileſt-pated men, a *Bulaam*, *Achitophel*, *Haman*, *Sanballat*, men admired for their counſel and deep plots, theſe are for his turne. A wicked cauſe needs a ſmooth Oratour, bad ware a pleaſing Chapman, as in particular, his inſtruments he uſeth to ſeduce and corrupt the mindes of men are commonly ſubtile-pated men, ſuch *that if it were poſſible ſhould deceive the very elect*. This made the Apoſtle ſo jealous of the *Corinthians*, whom he had eſpouſed to Chriſt, leſt as *Eve* by the *Serpent*, ſo their *minds ſhould be corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt*. He muſt be a cunning devil indeed, that can draw off the Spouſes love from her beloved, yet there is ſuch a witchery in Satans inſtruments, that many have been brought to flye on the face of thoſe truths and ordinances, yea, Chriſt himſelf to whom they have ſeemed eſpouſed formerly. Now in three particulars this ſort of Satans inſtruments ſhew their Maſters ſubtilty.

2. First, in aſperſing the good name of the ſincere meſſengers of Chriſt Satans old trick to raiſe his credit upon the ruined reputation of Chriſts faithful ſervants. Thus he taught *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, to charge *Moſes* and *Aaron*, *Ye take too much upon you, ſeeing all the Congregation is holy*; they would make the people believe, that it was the pride of their heart, to claim a monopoly to themſelves, as if none but *Aaron* and his fraternity were holy enough to offer incenſe, and by this ſubtile practice they ſeduced (for a while) in a manner, the whole Congregation to their ſide. So the lying Prophets (that were Satans Knights of the poſt to *Ahab*) fell foule on good *Micaiah*. Our Saviour himſelf was no better handled by the Phariſees and their Confederates, and Num. 16. 3, 16.

Paul

Paul the chief of the Apostles, his Ministry undermined, and his reputation blasted by false teachers, as if he had been some weak sorry Preacher, *His bodily presence is weak*, say they, *and his speech* 2 Cor. 10. 10. *contemptible*; and is this your admired man?

2. Secondly, in covering their impostures and errours with choice notions and excellent truths. *Arrius* himself, and other dangerous instruments of Satan were too wise to stuffe their discourses with nothing but heterodoxe matter, precious truths dropt from them with which they sprinkled their corrupt principles, yet with such Art as should not easily be discerned. This (as one observes) our Saviour warns his disciples of, when he bids them *beware of the leaven of the Pharisees*, (that is, of their errours.) But why leaven? for the secret mixture of it with the wholesom bread; you do not make your bread all of leaven, none would then eate it, but crumble a little into a whole batch, which sowers all: thus Christ doth tell the disciples, that the Pharisees among many truths mixe their errours, and therefore it behoves them to beware, lest with the truth the errour goes down also. Again, leaven is very like the dough, of the same grain with it, only differs in age and soureness: thus Christ intimates the resemblance of their errours to the truth, scraped, as it were, out of the Scriptures, but sowered with their own false glosses. This indeed makes it easie for Christs sheep to be infected with the scab of errour, because that weed which breeds the rot is so like the grace that nourisheth them.

3. Thirdly, their subtilty appears in holding forth such principles as are indulgent to the flesh. This brings in whole shoales of silly souls into their net, the heart of man loves of life to shape a Religion according to its own humour, and is easie to believe that to be a truth, which favours its own inclination. Now there are three lusts that Satans instruments labour to gratifie in their doctrine, Carnal Reason, Pride, and fleshly Liberty.

1. First, Carnal Reason, this is the great Idol which the more intelligent part of the world worship, making it the very standard of their faith, and from this bitter root have sprung those Arrian and Socinian heresies. And truly he that will go no further than reason will carry him, may hold out in the plain way of the Moral Law, but when he comes to the depths of the Gospel, must either go back, or be content that faith should help reason over.

Secondly,

Secondly, another luſt that Satan cockers, is Pride. Man naturally would be a god to himſelf, [though for clambering ſo high he got his fall] and whatever doctrine nouriſheth a good opinion of man in his own eye, this is acceptable to him, and this hath ſpawned another fry of dangerous errours. The Pelagian and ſemi-Pelagian, which ſet nature upon its own legs, and perſwade man he can go alone to Chriſt, or at leaſt with a little external help, of an hand to lead, or argument to excite, without any creating work in the ſoul. O, we cannot conceive how glib ſuch ſtuffe goes down. If one Workman ſhould tell you that your houſe is rotten, and muſt be pull'd down, and all new materials prepared; and another ſhould ſay no ſuch matter, ſuch a beam is good, and ſuch a ſparre may ſtand; a little coſt will ſerve the turne: it were no wonder that you ſhould liſten to him that would put you to leaſt coſt and trouble: the faithful ſervants of Chriſt tell ſinners from the Word, that man in his natural ſtate is corrupt and rotten, that nothing of the old frame will ſerve, and there muſt needs be all new; but in comes an Arminian, and blows up the ſinners pride, and tells him he is not ſo weak or wicked as the other repreſents him, if thou wilt thou mayeſt repent and beleeve, or at leaſt by exerting thy natural abilities, oblige God to ſuperadde what thou haſt not. This is the Workman that will pleaſe proud man beſt. 2.

Thirdly, Satan by his inſtruments nouriſheth that deſire of fleſhly liberty, which is in man by nature, who is a ſon of *Belial*, without yoke; and if he muſt wear any, that will pleaſe beſt, which hath the ſofteſt lining, and pincheth the fleſh leaſt, and therefore when the ſincere teachers of the Word will not abate of the ſtrictneſſe of the command, but preſſe ſincere obedience to it, then comes Satans inſtruments and ſay, Theſe are hard task-maſters, who will not allow one play-day in a year to the Chriſtian, but tie him to continual duty, we'll ſhew you an eaſier way to heaven: Come, ſaith the Papiſt, confeſſe but once a year to the Prieſt, (pay him well for his paines) and be an obedient ſon of the Church, and we'll diſpenſe with all the reſt. Come, ſaith the Familiſt, the Goſpel-Charter allows more liberty than theſe legal Preachers tell you of, they bid you repent and beleeve, when Chriſt hath done all theſe to your hand. What have you left to do but to nouriſh the fleſh? ſomething ſure is 3.

in it, that Impostors finde such quick return for their ware, while Truth hangs upon the log; and is it not this? that they are content to afford heaven cheaper to their disciples, than Christ will to his. He that sells cheapest shall have most customers, though at last best will be best cheap; Truth with self-denial, a better penny-worth, than errour with all its flesh-pleasing.

3. Thirdly, Satan makes choice of such as have a great name for holinesse, none to *a live bird* to draw other birds into the net. But is it possible that such should do this work for the devil? yes, such is the policy of Satan, and the frailty of the best, that the most holy men have been his instruments to seduce others. *Abraham* he tempts his wife to lye, *Say thou art my sister.* The old Prophet leads the man of God out of his way, 1 *Kings* 13. the holinesse of the man, and the reverence of his age, 'tis like, gave authority to his counsel. O how should this make you watchful, whose long travel and great progresse in the wayes of God have gained you a name of eminency in the Church, what you say, do; or hold, because you are file-leading men; and others look more on you, then their way.

4. Fourthly, Satan chooseth such, as by relation or affection have deep interest in the persons he would gaine. Some will kisse the childe for the Nurses sake, and like the Present for the hand that brings it. 'Tis like *David* would not have received that from *Nabal*, which he took from *Abigail*, and thanks her. Satan sent the apple by *Eves* hand to *Adam*. *Delilah* doth more with *Samson*, than all the *Philistines* bands, *Jobs* wife brings him the poison, *Curse God and dye.* Some think Satan spared her life, when he slew his children and servants, (though she was also within his Commission) as the most likely instrument, by reason of her relation and his affection, to lead him into temptation. Satan employes *Peter* a disciple to tempt Christ, at another time his friends and kinsfolk. Some Martyrs have confest, the hardest work they met withal, was to overcome the prayers and tears of their friends and relations. *Paul* himself could not get off this snare without heart-breaking: *What mean ye to weep, and to break my heart?* Act. 21. 13.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Wherein this Point of Satans ſubtilty, as a Tempter to ſin, is briefly applyed.

FIrſt, affect not ſinful policy and ſubtilty, it makes you but like the devil. There is the wiſdom of the Serpent, which is commended, and that is his perfection as a creature, in which both the literal and the myſtical excel, the one in an ingenious obſerving nature above the beaſts of the field, and the other in knowledge as an Angel above men; but as the ſubtilty of the one, and knowledge of the other is degenerate, and makes them more able to do miſchief, the one to the bodyes, the other to the ſouls of men, this kinde of wiſdom and ſubtilty is to be abhorred by us: *The Serpents eye* (as one ſaith) *does well only in the Doves head.* *Uſe.* 1.

Firſt, affect not ſubtilty in contriving any ſin. Some are *wiſe to do evil*, Jer. 4. 22. Maſters of this craft, who can as they lye on their beds, caſt their wicked deſignes into an artificial method, ſhewing a kinde of deviliſh wit therein, as the *Egyptians* who dealt wiſely (as they thought) with the *Iſraelites* and *Jezabel*, who had printed her bloody deſign in ſo faire a letter, that ſome might reade her Saint while ſhe was playing the devil. This is the black Art indeed, and will make the ſoul black as hell that practiſeth it. It is not hard for any (though a fool) to learn. Be but wicked, and the devil will help thee to be witty; Come but a while to his ſchool, and thou mayeſt ſoon be a *cunning man*. No ſins ſpeak a higher attainment in wickedneſſe, than thoſe which are the reſult of deliberate counſel and deep plottings. Creatures, as they go longer with their young, ſo their birth is more ſtrong and perfect, as the Elephant above all others. The longer a ſin is a forming and forging within, and the oftner the head and heart meet about it, the compleater the ſin. Here are many litters of unformed ſins in one, ſuch I mean, that are conceived and caſt forth in the hurry of an extemporary paſſion, ſuch ſudden acts ſhew weakneſſe, theſe other deep wickedneſſe. 1.

2. Secondly, take heed of hiding sin when thou hast committed it. This is one of the devices that are in mans heart, and as much Art and cunning is shewen in this, as in any one part of the sinners trade. What a trick had the Patriarchs to blinde their fathers eye with a *bloody coat?* *Josephs* Mistresse to prevent a charge from *Joseph*, accuseth him for what she is guilty, like the Robber who scap't by crying *Stop the Thief.* God taught man to make coats to cover his naked body, but the devil learnt him to weave these coverings to hide the nakednesse of his soul; the more subtile thou seemest in concealing thy sin, the more egregiously thou playest the fool. None so sham'd as the liar when found out, and that thou art sure to be. Thy covering is too short to hide thee from Gods eye, and what God sees, (if thou doest not put thy self to shame) he will tell all the world of hereafter) however thou escapest in this life.

3. Thirdly, take heed of subtilty and sinful policy, in compassing that which is lawful in it self: 'tis lawful to improve thy estate and husband it well for thy posterity, but take not the devils counsel, who will be putting thee upon some tricks in thy trade and slights in thy dealing; such may go for wise-men a while, but the Prophet reads their destiny, *Jer.* 17. 11. *At his end he shall be a fool.* 'Tis lawful to love our estate, life, liberty, but beware of sinful policy to save them. 'Tis no wisdome to shuffle with God, by denying his truth, or shifting off our duty to keep correspondence with men; he is a weak fencer that layes his soul at open guard to be stabbed and wounded with guilt, while he is lifting up his hands to save a broken head. Our fear commonly meets us at that door by which we think to run from it. *He that will save his life shall lose it.* As you love your peace, Christians, be plain-hearted with God and man, and keep the Kings high way; go the plain way of the command to obtaine thy desire, and not leap over hedge and ditch to come a little sooner to the journeys end; such commonly either meet with some stop that makes them come back with shame, or else put to venture their necks in some desperate leap. He is sure to come safer (if not sooner) home, that is willing to go a little about to keep God company. The Historians observation is worth the Christians remembrance: *Consilia callida primâ specie lata, tractatu dura, eventu tristia*, Livius. Crafty counsels promise fair at

first,

first, but prove more difficult in the managing, and in the end do pay the undertaker home with desperate sorrow.

Is Satan so subtile? O then think not to be too cunning for the devil, he'll be too hard for thee at last, sin not with thoughts of an after-repentance; it is possible thou meanest this at present: but doest thou think who sits down to play with this cheater, to draw out thy stock when thou pleasest? alas, poor wretch, he has a thousand devices to carry thee on, and engage thee deeper, till he hath not left thee any tenderness in thy conscience. As some have been served at play, intending only to venture a shilling or two, yet have by the secret witchery in gaming, played the very cloathes off their back before they had done; O how many have thus sinned away all their principles, yea, Profession it self, that they have not so much as this cloak left, but walk naked to their shame? Like children who got into a boat, think to play near the shore, but are unawares by a violent gust carried down to the wide sea. O how know you that dally with Satan, but that at last you may (who begin modestly) be carried down to the broad sea of prophaneness? Some men are so subtile to over-reach, and so cruel when they get men into their hands, that a man had better beg his bread than borrow of them. Such a Merchant is Satan cunning to insinuate, and get the creature into his books, and when he hath him on the hip, no more mercy to be had at his hand, than the Lamb may expect from the ravenous Wolfe. *Use 2.*

Study the wiles, and acquaint thy self with Satans policy. *Paul* takes it for granted, that every Saint doth in some measure understand them; *We are not ignorant of his devices*, 2 Cor. 2.11. He is but an ill fencer that knows and observes nothing of his enemies play; many particular stratagems I have laid down already, which may help a little, and for thy direction in this study of, and enquiry into Satans wiles, take this threefold counsel. *Use 3.*

First, take God into thy counsel. Heaven over-looks hell. God at any time can tell thee, what plots are hatching there against thee. Consider Satan as he is Gods creature, so God cannot but know him. He that makes the Watch, knowes every pin in it. He formed this crooked Serpent, though not the crookedness of this Serpent, and though Satans way in tempt- 1.

pting is as wonderful as the way of a Serpent on a rock, yet God teacheth him; yea, knowes all his thoughts together. *Hell it self is naked before him*, and this destroyer hath no covering. Again, consider him as Gods Prisoner, who hath him fast in chaines, and so the Lord, who is his Keeper, must needs know whither his Prisoner goes, who cannot stir without his leave. Lastly, consider him as his messenger, for so he is, *An evil spirit from the Lord vexed Saul*, and he that gives him his errand, is able to tell thee what it is. Go then and plough with Gods heifer, improve thy interest in Christ, who knows what his Father knows, and is ready to reveal all that concernes thee to thee, *Joh.* 15. 15. It was he who descried the devil coming against *Peter* and the rest of the Apostles, and faithfully revealed it to them, *Luke* 22. before they thought of any such matter. Through Christs hands passe all that is transacted in heaven and hell. We live in dayes of great actions, deep counsels, and plots on all sides, and only a few that stand on the upper end of the world know these mysteries of State, all the rest know little more than Pamphlet-Intelligence: Thus it is in regard of those plots which Satan in his infernal Conclave is laying against the souls of men, they are but a few that know any thing to purpose of Satans designes against them; and those are the Saints from whom God cannot hide his own counsels of love, but sends his Spirit to reveal unto them here, what he hath prepared for them in heaven, 1 *Cor.* 2. 10. and therefore much lesse will he conceal any destructive plot of Satan from them.

2. Be intimately acquainted with thy own heart, and thou wilt the better know his design against thee, who takes his method of tempting, from the inclination and posture of thy heart. As a General walks about the City, and viewes it well, and then raiseth his Batteries, where he hath the greatest advantage: So doth Satan compasse, and consider the Christian in every part before he tempts.

3. Lastly, be careful to reade the Word of God with observation. In it thou hast the History of the most remarkable battels that have been fought by the most eminent Worthies in Christs Army of Saints, with this great Warriour Satan; Here thou mayest see how Satan hath foiled them, and how they have recovered their

their loſt ground. Here you have his Cabinet-counſels opened, there is not a luſt which you are in danger of, but you have it deſcried, not a temptation which the Word doth not arme you againſt. It is reported that a certain Jew ſhould have poiſoned *Luther*, but was happily prevented by his picture which was ſent to *Luther*, with a warning from a faithful friend, that he ſhould take heed of ſuch a man when he ſaw him, by which he knew the Murderer, and eſcaped his hands. The Word ſhewes thee, O Chriſtian, the face of thoſe luſts, which Satan employes to butcher thy precious ſoul; *By them is thy ſervant warned*, ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 19. 11.

CHAP. V.

Wherein is ſhewed the ſubtilty of Satan, as a Troubler and an Accuſer for ſin, where many of his wiles and policies to diſquiet the Saints ſpirits are diſcovered.

THe ſecond General in which Satan appears ſuch a ſubtile enemy; is in moleſting the Saints peace, and diſquieting the Saints ſpirit. As this holy Spirits work is not only to be a Sanctifier, but alſo a Comforter, whoſe fruits are *righteouſneſſe and peace*, ſo the evil ſpirit Satan is both a ſeducer unto ſin, and an accuſer for ſin, a Tempter and a Troubler, and indeed in the ſame order. As the Holy Ghoſt is firſt a Sanctifier, and then a Comforter; ſo Satan firſt a Tempter, then a Troubler. *Joſephs* Miſtreſſe firſt tryes to draw him to gratifie her luſt, that ſtring breaking ſhe hath another to trounce him and charge him, and for a plea ſhe hath his coat to cover her malice, nor is it hard for Satan to pick ſome hole in the Saints coat, when he walks moſt circumſpectly. The proper ſeat of ſin is the Will, of comfort the Conſcience; Satan hath not abſolute knowledge of, or power over theſe, (being lock't up from any other but God) and therefore what he doth, either in defiling temptations, or diſquieting,

eting, is by wiles more than by open force, and he is not inferiour in troubling, to himſelf in tempting. Satan hath as the Serpent, a way by himſelf; other beaſts, their motion is direct, right on, but the Serpent goes a skue (as we ſay) winding and wreathing its body, that when you ſee a ſerpent creeping along, you can hardly diſcerne which way it tends; thus Satan in his vexing temptations hath many intricate policies, turning this way and that way, the better to conceale his deſigne from the Saint, which will appear in theſe following methods.

SECT. 1.

1. Firſt, he vexeth the Chriſtian by laying his brats at the Saints door, and charging him with that which is his own creature, and here he hath ſuch a notable Art, that many dear Saints of God are wofully hampered and dejected, as if they were the vileſt blaſphemers, and verieſt Atheiſts in the world; whereas indeed the cup is of his own putting into the ſack, but ſo ſlily conveyed into the Saints boſome, that the Chriſtian, though amazed and frighted at the ſight of them, yet being jealous of his own heart, and unacquainted with Satans tricks of this kind, cannot conceive how ſuch motions ſhould come there, (if not bred in, and vomited out by his own naughty heart) and ſo bears the blame of the ſin himſelf, becauſe he cannot finde the right father, mourning as one that is forlorn and caſt off by God, or elſe (ſaith he) I ſhould never have ſuch vermine of hell creeping in my boſome, and here Satan hath his end he propoſeth; for he is not ſo ſilly as to hope he ſhould have welcome with ſuch a horrid crue of blaſphemous and atheiſtical thoughts in that ſoul, where he hath been denied when he came in an enticing way; no, but his deſigne is by way of revenge, becauſe the ſoul will not proſtitute it ſelf to his luſt otherwayes, therefore to haunt it and ſcare it with thoſe imps of blaſphemy; As he ſerved *Luther* to whom he appeared, and when repulſed by him, went away and left a noiſome ſtinch behinde him in the room. Thus when the Chriſtian hath worſted Satan in his more pleaſing temptations, being madded, he belcheth forth this ſtinch of blaſphemous motions to annoy and affright him, that from them the Chriſtian may

may draw ſome ſad concluſion or other; and indeed the Chriſtians ſin lies commonly more in the concluſion, which he draws from them (as that he is not a child of God) than in the motions themſelves. All the counſel therefore I ſhall give thee in this caſe, is to do with theſe motions, as you uſe to ſerve thoſe vagrants and rogues that come about the Countrey, whom, though you cannot keep from paſſing through your Town, yet you look they ſettle not there, but whip them and ſend them to their own home: Thus give theſe motions the Law, in mourning for them, reſiſting of them, and they ſhall not be your charge, (yea, 'tis like you ſhall ſeldomer be troubled with ſuch gueſts,) but if once you come to entertain them, and be Satans nurſe to them, then the Law of God will caſt them upon you.

SECT 2.

Secondly, another wile of Satan as a troubler, is in aggravating the Saints ſins, (againſt which he hath a notable declamatory faculty) not that he hates the ſin, but the Saint; now in this, his chief ſubtilty is ſo to lay his charge, that it may ſeem to be the act of the holy Spirit; he knowes an arrow out of Gods quiver wounds deep; and therefore when he accuſeth he comes in Gods Name: as ſuppoſe a childe were conſcious to himſelf of diſpleaſing his father, and one that owes him a ſpite (to trouble him) ſhould counterfeit a letter from his father, and cunningly conveyes it into the ſons hand, who receives it as from his father, wherein he chargeth him with many heavy crimes, diſownes him, and threatens he ſhall never come in his ſight, or have penny portion from him, the poor ſon (conſcious to himſelf of many undutiful carriages, and not knowing the plot) takes on heavily, and can neither eat nor ſleep for grief, here is a real trouble begot from a falſe and imaginary ground: Thus Satan obſerves how the ſquares go between God and his children, ſuch a Saint he ſees tardy in this duty, faulty in that ſervice, and he knows the Chriſtian is conſcious of this, and that the Spirit of God will alſo ſhew his diſtaſte for theſe, both which prompts Satan to draw a charge at length, raking up all the bloody aggravations he can think of, and give it into the Saint as ſent from

God. Thus he taught *Jobs* friends to pick up thoſe infirmities, which drop't from him in his diſtreſſe, and ſhoot them back in his face, as if indeed they had been ſent from God to declare him an hypocrite, and denounce his wrath for the ſame.

Queſt. *But how ſhould we know the falſe accuſations of Satan from the rebukes of God and his Spirit?*

Anſw. Firſt, if they croſſe any former act or work of the Spirit in thy ſoul, they are *Satans*, not the holy *Spirits*. Now you ſhall obſerve, *Satans* ſcope in accuſing the Chriſtian, and aggravating his ſin, is to unſaint him, and perſwade him he is but an hypocrite. O, ſaith *Satan*, now thou haſt ſhewen what thou art, ſee what a foule ſpot is on thy coat, this is not the ſpot of a childe; whoever that was a *Saint* committed ſuch a ſin after ſuch a ſort? All thy comforts and confidence which thou haſt bragg'd of, were falſe, I warrant you; thus you ſee *Satan* at one blow daſheth all in pieces. The whole fabrick of grace which God hath been rearing up many yeares in the ſoul, muſt now at one puffe of his malicious mouth be blown down, and all the ſweet comforts with which the Holy *Spirit* hath ſeal'd up Gods love, muſt be defaced with this one blot, which *Satan* drawes over the faire copy of the *Saints* evidence. Well, ſoul, for thy comfort know, if ever the *Spirit* of God hath begun a ſanctifying or comforting work, cauſing thee to hope in his mercy, he never is, will, or can be the meſſenger to bring contrary newes to thy ſoul, his language is not yea and nay, but *Yea* and *Amen* for ever. Indeed when the *Saint* playes the wanton, he can chide, yea, will frown and tell the ſoul roundly of its ſin, as he did *David* by *Nathan*, *Thou art the man*, this thou haſt done, and paints out his ſin with ſuch bloody colours, as made *Davids* heart melt, as it were, into ſo many drops of water: but that ſhall not ſerve his turn, he tells him what a rod is ſteeping for him (that ſhall ſmart to purpoſe,) one of his own houſe, no other than his darling ſon ſhall riſe up againſt him, that he may the more fully conceive how ill God took the ſin of him, a childe, a *Saint*, when he ſhall know what it is to have his beloved childe traiterouſly invade his Crown, and unnaturally hunt for his precious life; yet not a word all this while is heard from *Nathan* teaching *David* to unſaint himſelf, and call in queſtion the work of God in his ſoul. No,

he

he had no ſuch commiſſion from God, he was ſent to make him mourne for his ſin, not from his ſinne to queſtion his ſtate which God had ſo oft put out of doubt.

Secondly, when they aſperſe the riches of Gods grace, and ſo charge the Chriſtian, that withal they reflect upon the good Name of God, then they are not of the Holy Spirit, but from Satan. When you finde your ſins ſo repreſented and aggravated to you, as exceeding either the mercy of Gods nature, or the grace of his Covenant, *Hic ſe aperit diabolus*: this comes from that foule liar. The Holy Spirit is Chriſts Spokeſman to commend him to ſouls, and to wooe ſinners to embrace the grace of the Goſpel, and can ſuch words drop from his ſacred lips, as ſhould break the match, and ſink Chriſts eſteem in the thoughts of the creature? you may know where this was minted. When you hear one commend another for a wife or good man, and at laſt come in with a but that daſheth all, you will eaſily think he is no friend to the man, but ſome ſlie enemy that by ſeeming to commend, deſires to diſgrace the more: Thus when you finde God repreſented to you as merciful and gracious, but not to ſuch a great ſinner as you, to have power and ſtrength, but not able to ſave thee, you may ſay, Avant Satan, thy ſpeech bewrayeth thee. 2.

SECT. 3.

Thirdly, another wile of Satan lies in cavilling at the Chriſtians duties and performances, by which he puts him to much toil and trouble. He is at Church as ſoon as thou canſt be, Chriſtian, for thy heart, yea, he ſtands under thy cloſet-window, and heares what thou ſayeſt to God in ſecret, all the while ſtudying how he may commence a ſuit againſt thee from thy duty; like thoſe that come to Sermons to carp and catch at what the Preacher ſaith, that they may make him an offender for ſome word or other miſ-placed; or like a cunning Opponent in the Schooles, while his adverſary is buſie in reading his poſition, he is ſtudying to confute it; and truely Satan hath ſuch an Art at this, that he is able to take our dutyes in pieces, and ſo diſfigure them that they ſhall appear formal, though never ſo zea- 3.

lous, hypocritical, though enricht with much sincerity. When thou hast done thy duty, Christian, then stands up this Sophister to ravel out thy work, there (will he say) thou playedst the hypocrite, zealous, but serving thy self, here wandring, there nodding; a little further puft up with pride, and what wages canst thou hope for at Gods hands, now thou hast spoil'd his work, and cut it all out into chips? Thus he makes many poor souls lead a weary life, nothing they do but he hath a fling at, that they know not whether best pray or not, heare or not; and when they have prayed and heard, whether it be to any purpose or not: Thus their souls hang in doubt, and their dayes passe in sorrow, while their enemy stands in a corner, and laughs at the cheat he hath put upon them; as one, who by putting a counterfeit spider into the dish, makes those that sit at table either out of conceit with the meat, that they dare not eat, or afraid of themselves if they have eaten, lest they should be poisoned with their meat.

Quest. But you will say, *What will you have us do in this case to withstand the cavils of Satan in reference to our duties?*

Answ. 1. First, let this make thee more accurate in all thou doest: 'tis the very end God aimes at in suffering Satan thus to watch you, that you his children might be the more circumspect, because you have one over-looks you, that will be sure to tell tales of you to God, and accuse thee to thy own self. Doth it not behove thee to write thy Copy fair, when such a Critick reades and scans it over? Doth it not concern thee to know thy heart well, to turn over the Scriptures diligently, that thou mayest know the state of thy soul-controversie in all the cases of conscience thereof, when thou hast such a subtile Opponent to reply upon thee?

2. Secondly, let it make thee more humble. If Satan can charge thee with so much in thy best duties, O what then can thy God do? God suffers sometimes the infirmities of his people to be known by the wicked, (who are ready to check and frump them for them) for this end, to humble his people, how much more low should these accusations of Satan, which are in a great part too true, lay us before God?

3. Thirdly, observe the fallacy of Satans argument, which discovered, will help thee to answer his cavil; the fallacy is double.

First,

Firſt, he will perſwade thee that thy duty and thy ſelf are hypocritical, proud, formal, &c. becauſe ſomething of theſe ſins are to be found in thy duty: Now, Chriſtian, learn to diſtinguiſh between pride in a duty, and a proud duty, hypocriſie in a perſon and an hypocrite, wine in a man and a man in wine. The beſt of Saints have the ſtirrings of ſuch corruptions in them and in their ſervices; theſe birds will light on an *Abrahams* ſacrifice, but comfort thy ſelf with this, that if thou findeſt a party within thy boſome pleading for God, and entering its proteſt againſt theſe, thou and thy ſervices are Evangelically perfect. God beholds theſe as the weakneſſes of thy ſickly ſtate here below, and pities thee, as thou wouldeſt do thy lame childe; how odious is he to us that mocks one for natural defects, a blear eye, or a ſtammering tongue? ſuch are theſe in thy new nature. Obſervable is that in Chriſts prayer againſt Satan, *Zech.* 3. 3. *The Lord ſaid unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, is not this a brand pluck't out of the fire?* As if Chriſt had ſaid, Lord, wilt thou ſuffer this envious ſpirit to twit thy poor childe with, and charge him for thoſe infirmities that cleave to his imperfect ſtate? he is but new pluck't out of the fire. No wonder there are ſome ſparks unquencht, ſome corruption unmortified, ſome diſorders unreformed in his place and calling, and what Chriſt did for *Joſhuah*, he doth unceſſantly for all his Saints, apologizing for their infirmities with his Father. 1.

Secondly, his other fallacy is in arguing from the ſin that is in our duties, to the non-acceptance of them. Will God, ſaith he, think'ſt thou, take ſuch broken groates at thy hand? Is he not a holy God? Now here, (Chriſtian) learn to diſtinguiſh and anſwer Satan. There is a double acceptance. There is an acceptance of a thing by way of payment of a debt, and there is an acceptance of a thing offered as a token of love, and teſtimony of gratitude. He that will not accept of broken money, or half the ſumme for payment of a debt: the ſame man, if his friend ſends him, though but a bent ſix pence, in token of his love, will take it kindly. 'Tis true (Chriſtian) the debt thou oweſt to God muſt be paid in good and lawful money, but (for thy comfort) here Chriſt is thy Paymaſter; ſend Satan to him, bid him bring his charge againſt Chriſt, who is ready at Gods right hand to clear his accounts, and ſhew his diſcharge for the whole debt; 2.

but now thy performances and obedience come under another notion, (as tokens of thy love and thankfulnesse to God,) and
Prov. 19. 22. such is the gracious disposition of thy heavenly Father, that he accepts thy mite: Love refuseth nothing that love sends. 'Tis not the weight or worth of the gift, but *the desire of a man is his kindnesse.*

SECT. 4.

4. A fourth wile of Satan as a troubler, is to draw the Saint into the depths of despair, under a specious pretence of not being humbled enough for sinne. This we finde singled out by the Apostle for one of the devils fetches. *We are not ignorant* (saith
2 Cor. 2. 11. he) *of his devices.* νοήματα, his Sophistical reasonings. Satan sets much by this slight; no weapon oftner in his hand: where is the Christian that hath not met him at this door? here Satan findes the Christian easie to be wrought on, the humours being stirr'd to his hand, while the Christian of his own accord complains of the hardnesse of his heart, and is very prone to believe any, who comply with his musing thoughts; yea, thinks every one flatters him, that would perswade him otherwise. 'Tis easier to dye that soul into black, which is of a sad colour already, than to make such a one take the lightsome tincture of joy and comfort.

Quest. *But how shall I answer this subtile enemy, when he thus perplexeth my Spirit, with not being humbled enough for sin, &c?*

Ans. I answer as to the former, labour to spy the fallacy of his argument, and his mouth is soon stop't.

First, Satan argues thus: There ought to be a proportion between sin and sorrow: But there is no proportion between thy sins and thy sorrow: Therefore thou art not humbled enough. What a plausible argument is here at first blush? For the *Major*, that there ought to be a proportion between sinne and sorrow, this
2 Chron. 3. 12. Satan will shew you Scripture for. *Manasseh* was a great sinner, and an ordinary sorrow will not serve his turne; *He humbled himself greatly before the Lord.* Now (saith Satan) weigh thy sin in the balance with thy sorrow; art thou as great a Mourner as thou hast been a sinner? so many yeares thou hast waged war against the Almighty, making havock of his lawes, loading his

his patience till it groaned again, raking in the ſides of Chriſt with thy bloody dagger (while thou didſt grieve his Spirit, and reject his grace,) and doeſt think a little remorſe (like a rolling cloud letting fall a few drops of ſorrow) will now be accepted? no, thou muſt ſteep in ſorrow as thou haſt ſoak't in ſin. Now to ſhew you the fallacy, we muſt diſtinguiſh of a twofold proportion of ſorrow.

Firſt, an exact proportion of ſorrow to the inherent nature and demerit of ſin.

Secondly, there is a proportion to the Law and Rule of the Goſpel. Now the firſt is not a thing feaſible, becauſe the injury done in the leaſt ſin is infinite, becauſe done to an infinite God; and if it could be feaſible, yet according to the tenour of the firſt Covenant it would not be acceptable; becauſe it had no clauſe to give any hope for an after-game by repentance; but the other which is a Goſpel-ſorrow, this is indeed *repentance unto life*, (both given by the Spirit of the Goſpel, and to be tried by the Rule of the Goſpel.) This is given for thy relief. As you ſee ſometimes in the high-way (where the waters are too deep for travellers,) you have a foot-bridge or Cauſey, by which they may eſcape the flood, and ſafely paſſe on; ſo that none but ſuch as have not eyes, or are drunk, will venture to go through the waters, when they may avoid the danger. Thou art a dead man, if thou think to anſwer thy ſin with proportionable ſorrow, thou wilt ſoon be above thy depth, and quackle thy ſelf with thy own teares, but never get over the leaſt ſin thou committed'ſt; go not on therefore as thou loveſt thy life, but turn aſide to this Goſpel-path, and thou eſcapeſt the danger. O you tempted ſouls, when Satan ſaith you are not humbled enough, ſee where you may be relieved; *I am a Roman*, (ſaith *Paul*,) *I appeal to Ceſar.* I am a Chriſtian, (ſay) I appeal to Chriſts Law; and what is the Law of the Goſpel concerning this? Heart-ſorrow is Goſpel-ſorrow; *They were pricked in their heart*, and *Peter* (like an honeſt Chirurgion) will not keep theſe bleeding Patients longer in pain with their wounds open; but preſently claps on the healing plaiſter of the Goſpel; *Believe in the Lord Jeſus.* Now a prick to the heart is more than a wound to the conſcience. The heart is the ſeat of life. Sin wounded there lyes a dying. To do any thing from the heart makes it acceptable, *Eph. 6. 6.* Now

Acts 5. 31. Zech. 12 10.

Acts 1. 37.

2 Cor. 5. 11.

poor

poor ſoul, hadſt thou ſate thus long in the devils ſtocks, if thou hadſt underſtood this aright? doth thy heart clear or condemn thee, when in ſecret thou art bemoaning thy ſin before God?
1 John 3, 21. if thy heart be falſe I cannot help you, no, not the Goſpel it ſelf, but if ſincere, thou haſt boldneſſe with God.

A ſecond argument Satan uſeth, is this: He whoſe ſorrow falls ſhort of theirs, that never truly repented, he is not humbled enough: But, ſoul, thy ſorrow falls ſhort of ſome, that never truly repented; *Ergo.* Well, the firſt Propoſition is true, but how will Satan prove his *minor*? Thus, *Ahab* he took on for his ſin, and went in ſack-cloth. *Judas* he made bitter complaint. O (ſaith Satan) didſt thou not know ſuch a one that lay under terrour of conſcience, walking in a ſad mournful condition ſo many moneths, and every one took him for the greateſt Convert in the Countrey? and yet he at laſt fell foully, and proved an Apoſtate; but thou never didſt feel ſuch ſmart, paſſe ſo many weary nights and dayes in mourning and bitter lamentation as he hath done, therefore thou falleſt ſhort of one that fell ſhort of repentance. And truly this is a ſad ſtumbling block to a ſoul in an houre of temptation. Like a ſhip ſunk in the mouth of the harbour, which is more dangerous to others than if it had periſht in the open ſea. There is leſſe ſcandal by the ſins of the wicked, who ſink (as it were) in the broad ſea of prophaneneſſe, than in thoſe who are convinced of ſin, troubled in conſcience, and miſcarry ſo near the harbour, within ſight, as it were, of ſaving grace. Tempted ſouls can hardly get over theſe without daſhing. Am I better than ſuch a one that proved naught at laſt? Now to help thee a little to finde out the fallacy of this argument, we muſt diſtinguiſh between the terrous that accompany ſorrow, and the intrinſecal nature of this grace. The firſt which are acceſſary may be ſeparated from the other, as the raging of the ſea, which is cauſed by the winde from the ſea, when the winde is down. From this diſtinction take two Concluſions.

1. Firſt, one may fall ſhort of an hypocrite in the terrours that ſometimes accompany ſorrow, and yet have the truth of this grace, which the other with all his terrours wants. Chriſtians run into many miſtakes, by judging rather according to that which is acceſſary, than that which is eſſential to the nature of duties

duties and graces. Sometimes thou heareſt one pray with a moving expreſſion (while thou canſt hardly get out a few broken words in duty,) and thou art ready to accuſe thy ſelf and to admire him; as if the gilt of the Key made it open the door the better; thou ſeeſt another abound with joy which thou wanteſt, and art ready to conclude his grace more, and thine leſſe, whereas thou mayeſt have more real grace, only thou wanteſt a light to ſhew thee where it lies. Take heed of judging by acceſſaries, perhaps thou haſt not heard ſo much of the ratling of the chains of hell, nor in thy conſcience the out-cries of the damned, to make thy fleſh tremble, but haſt thou not ſeen that in a bleeding Chriſt which hath made thy heart melt and mourne, yea, loath and hate thy luſts more than the devil himſelf? Truly (Chriſtian) 'tis ſtrange, to hear a Patient complain of his Phyſician, (when he findes his Phyſick work effectually, to the evacuating of his diſtempered humours, and the reſtoring his health) meerly becauſe he was not ſo ſick as ſome others with the working of it; ſoul, thou haſt more reaſon to be bleſſing God that the convictions of his Spirit wrought ſo kindly on thee, to effect that in thee, without thoſe terrours which have coſt others ſo dear.

Secondly, this is ſo weak an argument, that contrariwiſe the more the terrours are, the leſſe the ſorrow is for ſin while they remain. Theſe are indeed preparatory ſometimes to ſorrow, they go before this grace, as auſtere *John* before meek *Jeſus*. But as *John* went down when Chriſt went up, his *increaſe* was *Johns* decreaſe; ſo as truly godly ſorrow goes up, theſe terrours go down. As the winde gathers the clouds, but thoſe clouds ſeldome melt into a ſet rain, untill the winde falls that gathered them: ſo theſe terrours raiſe the clouds of our ſins in our conſciences, but when theſe ſins melt into godly ſorrow, this layes the ſtorme preſently; indeed, as the loud windes do blow away the raine, ſo theſe terrours do keep off the ſoul from this Goſpel-ſorrow. While the creature is making an out-cry, 'tis damn'd, 'tis damn'd, it is taken up ſo much with the fear of hell, that ſin as ſin, (which is the proper object of godly ſorrow) is little look't on or mourned for. A Murderer condemned to die, is ſo poſſeſt with the fear of death, and thought of the gallowes, that there lies the ſlaine body (it may be) before him, unlamented by him: but 2.

when his pardon is brought, then he can bestow his teares freely on his murthered friend; *They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourne.* Faith is the eye, this eye (beholding its sin piercing Christ, and Christ pardoning its sin) affects the heart, the heart affected sighes, these inward clouds melt and run from the eye of faith in teares: and all this is done when there is no tempest of terrour upon the spirit, but a sweet serenity of love and peace: and therefore, Christian, see how Satan abuseth thee, when he would perswade thee thou art not humbled enough, because thy sorrow is not attended with these legal terrours.

CHAP. VI.

A *brief Application of the second Branch of the Point*, viz. *Of Satans subtilty as a Troubler and Accuser for sin.*

Use 1. IS Satan so subtile to trouble the Saints peace? this proves them to be the children of Satan, who shew the same Art and subtilty in vexing the spirits of the Saints, as doth their infernal father: not to speak of bloody Persecutors, who are the devils slaughter-slaves to butcher the Saints, but of those who more slily trouble and molest the Saints peace.

1. First, such as rake up the Saints old sins, which God hath forgiven and forgotten, (meerly to grieve their spirits and bespatter their names,) these shew their deviliſh malice indeed, who can take such pains to travel many years back, that they may finde a handful of dirt to throw on the Saints face. Thus *Shimei* twitted *David*, *Come out thou bloody man.* When you that feare God meet with such reproaches, answer them as *Beza* did the Papists, who for want of other matter charged him for some wanton Poems penn'd by him in his youth, *Hi homunciones invident mihi gratiam Dei.* These men (said he) grudge me the pardoning mercy of God. 1 Sam. 16. 7.

2. Secondly, such as watch for the Saints halting, and catch at every infirmitie to make them odious and themselves merry. 'Tis

'Tis a dreadful curſe ſuch bring upon themſelves, (though they little think of it,) no leſſe than *Amaleks*, the remembrance of whoſe *name*, God threatned *to blot from under heaven*; why, what had *Amalek* done to deſerve this? they *ſmote the hinder-moſt, thoſe that were feeble*, and could not march with the reſt. And was it ſo great a cruelty to do this? much more to ſmite with the edge of a mocking tongue the feeble in grace. Deut. 25. 19.

Thirdly, ſuch who father their ſins upon the Saints, thus *Ahab* calls the Prophet *the Troubler of Iſrael*, when it was himſelfe and his fathers houſe. What a grief was it, think you, to *Moſes* his ſpirit, for the *Iſraelites* to lay the blood of thoſe that died in the wilderneſſe at his door? whereas (God knows) he was their conſtant Baile, when at any time Gods hand was up to deſtroy them: and this is the charge which the beſt of Gods ſervants in this crooked generation of ours lye under: We may thank them (ſay the profane) for all our late miſeries in the Nation: we were well enough till they would reforme us. O for ſhame, blame not the good Phyſick that was adminiſtred, but the corrupt body of the Nation that could not bear it. 3.

Fourthly, ſuch as will themſelves ſinne, meerly to trouble the Saints ſpirit, Thus *Rabſhakeh* blaſphemed, and when deſired to ſpeak in another language, he goes on the more to grieve them. Sometimes you ſhall have a profane wretch (knowing one to be conſciencious, and cannot brook to hear the Name of God taken in vain, or the wayes of God flouted,) will on purpoſe fall upon ſuch diſcourſe as ſhall grate his chaſte eares, and trouble his gracious ſpirit, ſuch a one ſtrikes father and childe at one blow, think it not enough to diſhonour God, except the Saint ſtands by to ſee and heare the wrong done to his heavenly Father. 4.

Secondly, This may afford matter of admiration and thankfulneſſe to any of you, (O ye Saints) who are not at this day under Satans hatches. Is he ſo ſubtile to diſquiet, and haſt thou any peace in thy conſcience? To whom art thou beholden for that ſerenity that is on thy ſpirit? to none but thy God, under whoſe wing thou ſitteſt ſo warme and ſafe. Is there not combuſtible matter enough in thy conſcience for his ſparks to kindle? Perhaps thou haſt not committed ſuch bloody ſinnes as others: that's not the reaſon of thy peace, for the leaſt is big enough to *Uſe 2.*

damne, much more to trouble thee. Thou hast not grossely fallen (may be) since Conversion, that's rare, (if thou beest of long standing) yet the ghosts of thy unregenerate sins might walk in thy conscience: thou hast had many testimonies of Gods favour, hast thou not? who more than *David?* yet he at a losse sometimes learning to spell his evidences, as if he could never have read them. The sense of Gods love comes and goes with the present taste. He that is in the dark (while there) sees not the more for former light. O bless God for that light which shines in at thy window; Satan is plotting to undermine thy comfort every day. This Thief sees thy pleasant fruits as they hang, and his teeth water at them, but the wall is too high for him to climbe; thy God keeps this Serpent out of thy Paradise. 'Tis not the grace of God in thee, but the favour of God, as a shield about thee, defends thee from the wicked one.

Psalme 77.

Use 3. Thirdly, let Satans subtilty to molest your peace, make thee, (O Christian) more wise and wary, thou hast not a fool to deal with, but one that hath wit enough to spill thy comfort, and spoil thy joy, if not narrowly watch't, this is the dainty bit he gapes for; 'tis not harder to keep the flies out of your Cup-boards in Summer, from tainting your provision, than Satan out of your consciences; many a sweet meal hath he robbed the Saints of, and sent them supperlesse to bed; take heed therefore that he roams not thine away also.

CHAP. VII.

Containing some Directions, tending to entrench and fortifie the Christian against the assaults and wiles of the devil, as a Troubler of the souls Peace.

Quest. HOw shall I stand in a defensive posture (may the Christian say) against these wiles of Satan as a Troubler?

SECT.

SECT. 1.

Anſw. 1. Firſt, if thou wouldeſt be guarded from him as a Troubler, take heed of him as a ſeducer. The haft of Satans hatchet, (with which he lies chopping at the root of the Chriſtians comfort) is commonly made of the Chriſtians wood: Firſt, he tempts to ſin, and then for it. Satan is but a creature, and cannot work without tooles, he can indeed make much of a little, but not any thing of nothing, (as we ſee in his aſſaulting of Chriſt, where he troubled himſelf to little purpoſe, becauſe *he came and found nothing in him.* Though the devil throws the ſtone, yet 'tis the mud in us which royles our comforts. 'Twas in vaine for the Philiſtines to fall on *Sampſon* till his lock was cut: take heed therefore of yielding to his enticing motions; theſe are the ſtumbling-block, at which he hopes thou'lt break thy ſhins, and bruiſe thy conſcience, which once done, let him alone to ſpin out the cure. Indeed a Saints fleſh heals not ſo eaſily as others: drink not of the devils waſſel, there is poyſon in the cup, his wine is a *mocker*, look not on it as it ſparkles in the temptation; what thou drinkeſt down with ſweetneſſe, thou wilt be ſure to bring up again as gall and wormwood. Above all ſins, take heed of preſumptuous ones, thou art not out of the danger of ſuch. Sad ſtories we have of Saints falls, and what follows? then, Take him Jailor, ſaith God, (*Deliver ſuch a one unto Satan*; and if a Saint be the Priſoner, and the devil the Keeper, you may gueſſe how he ſhall be uſed. O how he will teare and rend thy conſcience! Though that dreadful Ordinance is not uſed (as it ſhould be) in the Church, yet Gods Court ſits, and if he excommunicate a ſoul from his preſence, he falls preſently into Satans clutches. Well, if through his ſubtility thou haſt been overtaken, take heed thou ſtayeſt not in the devils quarters: ſhake the viper off thy hand, ply thee to thy Chyrurgeon: green wounds cure beſt, but if thou neglecteſt, and the winde get to it, thy conſcience will ſoon feſter. *Ahab* (we read) was wounded in battel, and was loath to yield to it, (it is ſaid) *he was held up in his chariot*, but he died for it: when a ſoul hath received a wound, committed a ſin, Satan labours to bouſter him up with flattering hopes, holds him up, as it were, in his chariot againſt

John 14. 30.

Pſalme 19. 13.

1 Kings 22. 35.

God; what yield for this? afraid for a little scratch, and lose the spoile of thy future pleasure for this? O take heed of listening to such counsel, the sooner thou yieldest, the fairer quarter thou shalt have. Every step in this way sets thee further from thy peace. A rent garment is catch't by every naile, and the rent made wider. Renew therefore thy repentance speedily, whereby this breach may be made up, and worse prevented, which else will befall thee.

SECT. II.

2. 2ly, study that grand Gospel-truth of a souls Justification before God, acquaint thy self with this in all its causes; the moving cause, Rom.3.24. the free mercy of God, being justified freely by his grace, the meritorious, which is the blood of Christ; and the instrumental, faith, with all the sweet priviledges that flow from it. An effectual door once open'd to let the soul into this truth, would not only spoil the Popes market (as *Gardner* said) but the devils also; when Satan comes to disquiet the Christians peace, (for want of a right understanding here) he is soon worsted by his enemy: as the silly hare which might escape the dogs in some covert or burrough that is at hand, but (trusting to her heels) is by the print of her own feet and sent, which she leaves behinde, followed, till at last (weary and spent) she falls into the mouth of them. In all that a Christian doth, there is a print of sinful infirmity, and a sent by which Satan is enabled to trace and pursue him over hedge and ditch, this grace and that duty, till the soul, not able to stand before the accusation of Satan, is ready to fall down in despair at his feet: whereas here's a hiding place, whither the enemy durst not come, the clefts of the rock, the hole of the staires, which this truth leads unto. When Satan chargeth thee for a sinner, perhaps thou interposest thy repentance and reformation, but soon art beaten out of those works, (when thou art shewen the sinful mixtures that are in them) whereas this truth would choak all his bullets, that thou believest on him who hath said, Rom.4.5. *Not unto him that worketh, but unto him that believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is imputed for righteousnesse.* Get therefore into this tower of the Gospel-Covenant, and rowle this

this truth, (as ſhe that ſtone on the head of *Abimelech*) on the head of Satan.

SECT. 3.

Thirdly, be ſure (Chriſtian) thou keepeſt the Plains. Take heed that Satan coop thee not up in ſome ſtraits, where thou canſt neither well fight, nor flie. Such a trap the *Egyptians* hoped they had the *Iſraelites* in, when they cryed, *They are entangled, they are entangled.* There are three kinds of ſtraits wherein he labours to entrap the Chriſtians. Nice Queſtions, obſcure Scriptures, and dark Providences. 3.

Firſt, he labours to puzzle him with nice and ſcrupulous queſtions, (on purpoſe to retard the work, and clog him in his motion) that meeting with ſuch intricacies in his Chriſtian courſe, which he cannot eaſily reſolve, thereby he may be made, either to give over, or go on heavily: therefore we have particular charge not to trouble the weak heads of young Converts with *doubtful diſputations.* Sometimes Satan will be asking the ſoul, how it knowes its election: and where he findes one not ſo fully reſolved, as to dare to own the ſame, he frames his Argument againſt ſuch a ones cloſing with Chriſt and the Promiſe; as if it were preſumption to aſſume that, (which is the only portion of the Elect) before we know our ſelves of that number. Now, Chriſtian, keep the Plains and thou art ſafe. 'Tis plain, we are not to make Election a ground for our faith, but our faith and calling a *medium* or argument to prove our Election. Election indeed is firſt in order of divine acting. God chooſeth before we beleeve; yet faith is firſt in our acting. We muſt believe before we can know we be elected, yea, by beleeving we know it. The Husbandman knowes 'tis Spring by the ſprouting of the graſſe, though he hath no Aſtrology to know the Poſition of the Heavens; thou mayeſt know thou art Elect, as ſurely by a work of grace in thee, as if thou hadſt ſtood by Gods elbowe when he writ thy name in the book of life. It had been preſumption for *David* to have thought he ſhould have been King, till *Samuel* anointed him, but then none at all; when thou believeſt firſt, and cloſeſt with Chriſt, then is the Spirit of God ſent to anoint. 1. Rom. 14. 1.

anoint thee to the Kingdom of Heaven: this is that holy oyle which is poured upon none but heires of glory; and 'tis no presumption to reade what Gods gracious purpose was towards thee of old, when he prints those his thoughts, and makes them legible in thy effectual calling; here thou doest not go up to heaven, and pry into Gods secrets, but heaven comes down to thee, and reveals them. Again, he will ask the Christian what was the time of his Conversion; Art thou a Christian (will he say) and dost thou not know when thou commencedst? now keep the Plains, and content thy self with this, that thou seest the streams of grace, though the time of thy Conversion be like the head of *Nylus*, not to be found. God oft comes betimes, before grosse sins have deflowered the soul, and steales into the creatures bosome without much noise. In such a case Satan doth but abuse thee when he sends thee on this errand; you may know the Sun is up, though you did not observe when it rose. Again, what will become of thee (saith Satan) if God should bring thee into such an affliction or trial, when thou must burn or turn, or when all thy outward estate shall be rent from thee, no meal in the barrel, no money in the purse; darest thou have so good an opinion of thy self, as to think that thy faith will hold out in such an houre of temptation? If thou hast but half an eye, Christian, thou mayest see what Satan drives at: this is an ensnaring question; by the fear of future troubles he labours to bring thee into a neglect of thy present duty, and indispose thee also for such a state whenever it falls. If a man hath much businesse to do on the morrow, 'tis his wisdom to discharge his minde thereof, (when composing to sleep) lest the thoughts thereof break his rest, and make him the more unfit in the morning. The lesse rest the soul hath in God and his promise concerning future events, the lesse strength it will finde to bear them when the pinch comes. When therefore thou art molested with such fears, pacifie thy heart with these three plain Conclusions.

First, every event is the product of Gods Providence, not a sparrow, much lesse a Saint falls to the ground by poverty, sicknesse, persecution, &c. but the hand of God is in it.

Secondly, God hath put in caution *he will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* He that enables thee in one condition, will in another.

Heb. 13. 5.

other. God learns his servants their whole trade. Grace is an universal principle. At the first moment of thy spiritual life suffering grace was infused as well as praying grace.

Thirdly, God is wise to conceal the succours he intends in the several changes of thy life, that so he may draw thy heart into an entire dependance on his faithful promise. Thus to try the mettal of *Abrahams* faith he let him go on, till his hand was stretch't forth, and then he comes to his rescue. Christ sends his disciples to sea, but stayes behinde himself, on a design to try their faith, and shew his love. Comfort thy self therefore with this, though thou seest not thy God in the way, yet thou shalt finde him in the end.

Secondly, Satan perplexeth the tender consciences of doubting Christians with obscure Scriptures, whose sense lies too deep for their weak and distempered judgments, readily to finde out, and with these he hampers poor souls exceedingly; indeed as melancholy men delight in melancholy walks, so doubting soules most frequent such places of Scripture in their musing thoughts, as encrease their doubts; how many have I known that have look't so long on those difficult places, *Heb.* 6. 7. *Heb.* 10. 26. (which passe the understanding as a swift stream the eye, so that the sense is not perceived without great observation,) till their heads have turned round, and they at last (not able to untie the difficulties,) have fallen down into despairing thoughts and words of their own condition, crying out, O they have sinned against knowledge of the truth, and therefore no mercy remains for them; who if they would have refreshed their understandings by looking off these places, (whose engraving is too curious to be long pored on by a weak eye,) they might have found that in other Scriptures plainly expresst, which would have enabled them, as through a glasse, more safely to have viewed these? Therefore Christian keep the Plaines; thou mayest be sure 'tis thine enemy that gives thee such stones to break thy teeth, when thy condition calls rather for bread and wine; such Scriptures, I mean, as are most apt to nourish thy faith, and cheere thy drooping spirit. When thou meetest such plain Scriptures which speak to thy case, go over where it is fordable, and do not venture beyond thy depth. Art thou afraid because thou hast sinned since the knowledge of the truth, 2.

and therefore no sacrifice remains for thee? See *David* and *Peters* case, how it patterns thine, and left upon record that their recovery may be a Key in thine hand to open such places as these; mayest thou not safely conclude from these, this is not their meaning, that none can be saved that sin after knowledge? Indeed in both those places, it is neither meant of the falls of such as ever had true grace, nor of a falling away in some particular acts of sin, but of a total universal falling away from the Faith, (the doctrine of it as well as seeming practice of it.) Now if the root of the matter were ever in thee, other Scriptures will first comfort thee against those particular apostasies into which thou hast relapsed, by sweet promises inviting such to return, and Precedents of Saints, who have had peace spoken to them after such folly, and also they will satisfie thee against the other, by giving full security to thy faith, that thy little grace shall not dye, being immortal, though not in its proper essence, because but a creature, yet by Covenant, as it is a childe of Promise.

3. Thirdly, dark Providences. From these Satan disputes against Gods love to, and grace in a soul. First, he got a commission to plunder *Job* of his temporal estate, and bereave him of his children, and then labours to make him question his spiritual estate and sonship: his wife would have him entertain hard thoughts of God, (saying, *Curse God and dye,*) and his friends as hard thoughts of himselfe, (as if he were an hypocrite) and both upon the same mistake, as if such an afflicted condition and a gracious state were inconsistent. Now (Christian) keep the Plaines, and neither from this charge God foolishly for thine enemy, nor thy selfe as his, Reade the saddest Providence with the Comment of the Word, and thou canst not make such an harsh interpretation. As God can make a streight line with a crooked stick, be righteous when he useth wicked instruments; so also gracious when he dispenseth harsh Providences. *Joseph* kept his love, when he spake roughly to his brethren. I do not wonder that the wicked think they have Gods blessing, because they are in the warme Sun: Alas, they are strangers to Gods counsels, void of his Spirit, and sensual, judging of God and his Providence, by the report their present feeling makes of them; like little children, who think every one loves them that gives them

them plums. But 'tis ſtrange, that a Saint ſhould be at a loſſe for his afflicted ſtate, when he hath a Key to decipher Gods character: Chriſtian, hath not God ſecretly inſtructed thee by his Spirit from the Word, how to reade the ſhort-hand of his Providence? doeſt not thou know that the Saints afflictions ſtand for bleſſings? *Every ſonne whom he loves he corrects*; and proſperity in a wicked ſtate, muſt it not be read a curſe? doth not God damne ſuch to be rich, honourable, victorious in this world, as well as to be tormented in another world? God gives them more of theſe than they ſeem to deſire ſometimes, and all to binde them faſter up in a deep ſleep of ſecurity, as *Jael* ſerved *Siſera*, he ſhall have *milk*, though he asked but *water*, that ſhe might naile him the ſurer to the ground. Milk having a *property* (as ſome write) to encline to ſleep. Judg. 5. 25.

SECT. 4.

Fourthly, be careful to keep thy old receits which thou haſt had from God for the pardon of thy ſinnes. There are ſome gaudy dayes, and Jubilee-like Feſtivals, when God comes forth clothed with the robes of his mercy, and holds forth the Scepter of his grace more familiarly to his children than ordinary, bearing witneſſe to their faith, ſincerity, &c. and then the firmament is clear, not a cloud to be ſeen to darken the Chriſtians comfort. Love and joy are the ſouls repaſt and paſtime, while this feaſt laſts. Now when God withdrawes, and this chear is taken off, Satans work is how he may deface and weare off the remembrance of this teſtimony, which the ſoul ſo triumphs in for its ſpiritual ſtanding, that he may not have it as an evidence when he ſhall bring about the ſuit again, and put the ſoul to produce his writings for his ſpiritual ſtate, or renounce his claim. It behoves thee therefore to lay them up ſafely; ſuch a teſtimony may ſerve to non-ſuit thy accuſer many years hence; one affirmative from Gods mouth for thy pardoned ſtate, carryes more weight (though of old date) than a thouſand negatives from Satans. *Davids Songs of old* ſpring in with a light to his ſoul in his midnight-ſorrowes. 4.

But what counſel would you give me (ſaith the diſtreſſed ſoul,) *Queſt.*

who cannot faſten on my former comforts, nor dare to vouch thoſe evidences, which once I thought true? I find indeed there have been ſome treaties of old between God and my ſoul; ſome hopes I have had, but theſe are now ſo defaced and interlined with back-ſlidings, repentances and falls again, that now I queſtion all my evidences, whether true or counterfeit, what ſhould one in this caſe do?

Anſ. First, renew thy repentance, as if thou hadſt never repented. Put forth freſh acts of faith, as if thou hadſt never believed. This ſeriouſly done will ſtop Satans mouth with an unexpected anſwer. Let him object againſt thy former actings as hypocritical, what can he ſay againſt thy preſent repenting and beleeving, which if true, ſets thee beyond his ſhot. It will be harder for Satan to diſprove the preſent workings of Gods gracious Spirit, whileſt the impreſſions thereof are freſh, than to pick an hole in thy old deeds and evidences. Acts are tranſient, and as wicked men look at ſins committed many years ſince, as little or none, by reaſon of that breadth of time which interpoſeth; ſo the Chriſtian upon the ſame account ſtands at great diſadvantage, to take the true aſpect of thoſe acts of grace, which ſo long ago paſſed between God and him, though ſometimes even theſe are of great uſe. As God can make a ſinner poſſeſſe the ſins of his youth, as if they were newly acted to his terrour in his old age; ſo God can preſent the comforts and evidences which of old the Saint received, with thoſe very thoughts he had then of them, as if they were freſh and new.

2. And therefore ſecondly; If yet he haunts thee with the fears of thy ſpiritual eſtate, ply thee to the throne of grace, and beg a new copy of thy old evidence, which thou haſt loſt. The Original is in the Pardon-Office in Heaven, whereof Chriſt is Maſter; if thou beeſt a Saint thy name is upon record in that Court; make thy moane to God, hear what newes from Heaven, rather than liſten to the tales which are brought by thine enemy from hell. Did ſuch reaſon leſſe with Satan, and pray over their fears more to God, they might ſooner be reſolved. Can you expect truth from a liar, and comfort from an enemy? Did he ever propheſie well of believers? Was not Job the Devils hypocrite, whom God vouch't for a non-ſuch in holineſſe, and prov'd him ſo at laſt? If he knew thou wert a Saint, would he

tell

tell thee so? if an hypocrite, he would be as loath thou shouldest know it; turn thy back therefore on him, and go to thy God: fear not, but sooner or later he will give his hand again to thy Certificate. But look thou dost not rashly passe a censure on thy self, because a satisfactory answer is not presently sent at thy desire; the Messenger may stay long, and bring good newes at last.

Thirdly, shun battel with thine enemy while thou art in a fitter posture; and that thou mayest draw into thy trenches, and make an honourable retreat into those fastnesses and strengths, which Christ hath provided for his sick and wounded souldiers. Now there are two places of advantage into which deserted souls may retire; the Name of God, and the absolute Promises of the Gospel; these I may call the fair Havens, which are then chiefly of use, when the storme is so great that the ship cannot live at sea: O, saith Satan, dost thou hope to see God? none but the pure in heart shall be blest with that vision. Think'st thou to have comfort? that is the portion of the Mourners in spirit. Now, soul, though thou canst not say (in the hurry of temptation) thou art the pure and the Mourner in spirit, yet then say thou believest God is able to work these in thee, yea, hath promised such a mercy to poor sinners, 'tis his Covenant, (*He will give a new heart, a clean heart, a soft heart,*) and here I wait, knowing, as there was nothing in the creature to move the great God to make such Promises; so there can be nothing in the creature to hinder the Almighty his performance of them, where and when he pleaseth. This act of faith, accompanied with a longing desire after that grace thou canst not yet finde, and an attendance on the means, though it will not fully satisfie all thy doubts, (may be) yet will keep thy head above water, that thou despairest not; and such a shore thou needst in this case, or the house falls. 3.

Fourthly, If yet Satan dogs thee, call in help, and keep not the devils counsel. The very strength of some temptations lies in the concealing of them, and the very revealing of them to some faithful friend, (like the opening and pricking of an impostume) gives the soul present ease: Satan knowes this too well; and therefore, as some thieves, when they come to rob an house, either gagge them in it, or hold a pistol to their breast, frighting them with death, if they cry or speak: 4.

Thus Satan that he may more freely rifle the soul of its peace and comfort, over-awes it so, that it dares not disclose his temptation. O, saith Satan, if thy brethren or friends know such a thing by thee, they'l cast thee off, others will hoote at thee. Thus many a poor soul hath been kept long in its pangs by biting them in; thou loseſt (Christian) a double help by keeping the devils secret, the counsel and prayers of thy fellow-brethren; and what an invaluable losse is this?

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Saints victory over their subtile enemy, and whence it is that creatures so overmatch't should be able to stand against Satans wiles.

THe second Branch of the Apostles Argument followes, to excite them the more vigourously to their armes; and that is from the possibility, yea, certainty of standing against this subtile enemy, if thus arm'd, *That ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* So that this gives the Apostles argument its due temperament: for he meant not to scare them into a cowardly flight, or sullen despaire of victory, when he tells them their enemy is so subtile and politick: but to excite them to a vigourous resistance, from the assured hope of strength to stand in battel, and victoriously after it; which two I conceive are comprehended in that phrase, standing against the wiles of Satan. Sometimes *to stand* implyes a fighting posture; so *verse* 14. Sometimes a conquering posture, *Job* 19. 25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.* That earth which was the field, where all the bloody battels were fought betwixt him and Satan, on it shall he stand, when not an enemy shall dare to shew his head. So that taking both these in: the Observation is,

Doct. Satan with all his wits and wiles shall never vanquish a soul arm'd with true grace; nay, he that hath this armour of God on, shall vanquish him. Look into the Word, you shall not finde

a Saint, but hath been in the liſt with him, ſifted and winnowed more or leſſe by this enemy, yet at laſt we finde them all coming off with an honourable victory: as in *David*, *Job*, *Peter*, *Paul*, who were the hardeſt put to it of any upon record, and leſt ſome ſhould attribute their victory to the ſtrength of their inherent grace, above other of their weaker brethren, you have the glory of their victories appropriated to God, in whom the weak are as ſtrong as the ſtrongeſt. We ſhall give a double Reaſon of this truth, why the Chriſtian who ſeems to be ſo over-match't, is yet ſo unconquerable. 2 Cor. 12. 9. Jam. 5. 21.

Firſt, the curſe that lyes upon Satan and his cauſe. Gods curſe blaſts whereever it comes. The *Canaanites* with their neighbour-Nations were *bread* for *Iſrael*, though people famous for warre; and why? They were curſed Nations. The *Egyptians* a politick people; *Let us deal wiſely*, (ſay they) yet being curſed of God; this lay like a thorne at their heart, and was at laſt their ruine; yea, let the Iſraelites themſelves, (who carry the badge of Gods Covenant on their fleſh) by their ſins once become the people of Gods curſe, and they are trampled like dirt under the Aſſyrians feet. This made *Balak* beg ſo hard for a curſe upon *Iſrael*. Now there is an irrevokeable curſe cleaves to Satan from *Gen.* 3. 14, 15. *And the Lord ſaid to the Serpent, Becauſe thou haſt done this, thou art curſed, &c.* which place, though partly meant of the literal ſerpent, yet chiefly of the devil and the wicked, (his ſpiritual ſerpentine brood) as appears by the enmity pronounced againſt the Serpents ſeed and the womans, which clearly holds forth the feud between Chriſt with his ſeed, againſt the devil and his. Now there are two things in that curſe which may comfort the Saints. Firſt, the curſe proſtrates Satan under their feet: *Upon thy belly ſhalt thou go*, which is no more than is elſewhere promiſed, that God *will ſubdue Satan under our feet*. Now this proſtrate condition of Satan aſſures believers, that the devil ſhall never lift his head (that is, his wily policy) higher than the Saints heele. He may make thee limp, but not bereave thee of thy life, and this bruiſe which he gives thee ſhall be rewarded with the *breaking* of his *own head*, that is, the utter ruine of him and his cauſe. Secondly, his food is here limited and appointed. Satan ſhall not devour whom he will. The *duſt* is his food, which ſeems to reſtrain his power to the wicked, *Reaſ.* 1. Iſa. 10. 5.

who,

who are of the earth earthy, meere dust; but for those who are of a heavenly extraction, their graces are reserved for Christs food, *Cant.* 7. 13. and their souls surely are not a morsel for the devils tooth.

The second reason is taken from the wisdome of God, who as he undertakes the ordering of the Christians way to heaven, *Psal.* 37. 24. so especially this businesse of Satans temptations. We finde Christ was not led of the evil spirit into the wilderness to be tempted, but of the Holy Spirit, *Mat.* 4. 1. Satan tempts not when he will, but when God pleaseth: and the same *Holy Spirit* which led Christ into the field, brought him off with victory. And therefore we finde him marching in *the Power of the Spirit* (after he had repulsed Satan) into *Galilee*, *Luke* 4. 14. When Satan tempts a Saint, he is but Gods messenger, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. *There was given to me a thorne in the flesh, the Messenger of Satan to buffet me.* So our Translation. But rather as *Beza*, who will have it *in casu recto*, the Messenger Satan, implying that he was sent of God to *Paul*; And indeed the errand he came about was too good and gracious to be his own, *Lest I should be exalted above measure*; The devil never meant to do *Paul* such a good office; but God sends him to *Paul*, as *David* sent *Uriah* with letters to *Joab*, neither knew the contents of their message. The devil and his instruments both are Gods instruments, therefore the wicked are called his *sword*, his *axe*: now let God alone to wield the one and handle the other. He is but a bungler that hurts and hackles his own legs with his own axe; which God should do, if his children should be the worse for Satans temptations. Let the devil choose his way, God is for him at every weapon. If he'll try it by force of armes, and assault the Saints by persecution, as *the Lord of Hosts*, he will oppose him. If by policy and subtilty, he is ready there also. The devil and his whole counsel are but fooles to God. Nay, their wisdome, foolishnesse. Cunning and Art commend every thing but sinne. The more artificial the watch, the picture, &c. the better; but the more wit and Art in sin, the worse, because it is employed against an All-wise God, that cannot be out-witted, and therefore will in the end but pay the workmen in greater damnation. *The foolishnesse of God is wiser than men*, yea, than the wisdom of men, and devils, that is, the means and instruments which God opposeth

Psal. 17. 13.
Isa. 10. 15.

poſeth Satan withal. What weaker than a Sermon? who ſillier than the Saints in the account of the wiſe world? yet God is wiſer in a weak Sermon, than Satan is in his deep plots (wherein the State heads of a whole Conclave of profound Cardinals are knock't together:) wiſer in his ſimple ones, than Satan in his *Achitophels* and *Sanballats*; and truly God chooſeth on purpoſe to defeat the policies of hell and earth by theſe, that he may put ſuch to greater ſhame, 1 (*Cor.*1.21. How is the great Scholar aſhamed to be baffled by a plain Countrey-mans argument? thus God calls forth *Job* to wreſtle with Satan and his Seconds, (for ſuch his three friends ſhewed themſelves in taking the devils part) and ſure he is not able to hold up the cudgels againſt the fencing-Maſter who is beaten by one of the Scholars. God ſits laughing, while hell and earth ſit plotting, *Pſal.* 2. 4. *He diſappointeth the devices of the crafty*, he breaketh their ſtudied thoughts and plots, as the words import, *Job* 5. 12. in one moment pulling down the labours of many years policy. Indeed as great men keep wilde beaſts for game and ſport, (as the fox, the boare, &c.) ſo doth God Satan and his inſtruments, to manifeſt his wiſdome in the taking of them. It is obſerved, that the very hunting of ſome beaſts affords not only pleaſure to the Hunter, but alſo more ſweetneſſe to the Eater. Indeed God by diſplaying of his wiſdome in the purſuit of the Saints enemies doth ſuperadde a ſweet reliſh to their deliverances at laſt. *He brake the heads of Leviathan in pieces, and gave him to be meat to his people.* After he had hunted *Pharaoh* out of all his formes and burrowes, now he breaks the very braines of all his plots, and ſerves him up to his people, with the garniſhment of his wiſdom and power about.

CHAP. IX.

An account is given, how the All-wise God doth out-wit the devil in his tempting of Saints to sin, wherein are laid down the ends Satan propounds, and how he is prevented in them all, with the gracious issue that God puts to these his temptations.

Quest. *But how doth God defeat Satan, and out-wit his wiles in tempting his Saints?*

Answ. This God doth by accomplishing his own gracious ends for the good and comfort of his people out of those temptations from which Satan designes their ruine, this is the noblest kinde of Conquest, to beat back the devils weapon to the wounding of his own head, yea, to cut it off with the devils own sword; thus God sets the devil to catch the devil, and layes, as it were, his own counsels under Satans wings, and makes him hatch them. Thus the *Patriarchs* helpt to fulfil *Joseph's* dream, while they are thinking to rid their hands of him. To instance in a few particulars.

SECT. I.

1. First, Satan by his temptations aimes at the defiling of the Christians conscience, and disfiguring that beautiful face of Gods image, which is engraven with holinesse in the Christians bosome, he is an unclean spirit himself, and would have them such, that he might glory in their shame; but God out-wits him, for he turneth the temptations of Satan to sin, to the purging them from sinne; they are the *black soap* with which God washeth his Saints *white*.

1. First, God useth the temptations of Satan to one sin, as a preventive against another; so *Pauls thorn in the flesh* to prevent his pride. God sends Satan to assault *Paul* on that side where he is strong, that

that in the mean time he may fortifie him where he is weak. Thus Satan is befool'd, as ſometimes we ſee an army ſitting down before a town, where it waſts its ſtrength to no purpoſe, and in the mean time gives the enemy an advantage to recruit; and all this by the counſel of ſome *Huſhai*, that is a ſecret friend to the contrary ſide: God, who is the Saints true friend, ſits in the devils Councel, and over-rules proceedings there to the Saints advantage; He ſuffers the devil to annoy the Chriſtian with temptations to blaſphemy, atheiſme, and by theſe, together with the troubles of ſpirit they produce; the ſoul is driven to duty, is humbled in the ſenſe of theſe horrid apparitions in its imagination, and ſecured from abundance of formality and pride, which otherwiſe God ſaw invading him. As in a family, ſome buſineſſe falls out, which keeps the Maſter up later than ordinary, and by this the thief, who that night intended to rob him, is diſappointed; had not ſuch a ſoul had his ſpirit of prayer and diligence kept awake by thoſe afflicting temptations, 'tis likely Satan might have come as a ſeducer, and taken him napping in ſecurity.

Secondly, God purgeth out the very ſin Satan tempts to, even by his tempting. *Peter* never had ſuch a conqueſt over his ſelf-confidence, never ſuch an eſtabliſhment of his faith, as after his foule fall in the High Prieſts hall. He that was ſo well perſwaded of himſelfe before, as to ſay, Though all were offended with Chriſt, yet would not he, how modeſt and humble was he in a few dayes become, when he durſt not ſay he loved Chriſt more than his fellow-brethren, to whom before he had preferr'd himſelf? what an undaunted Confeſſour of Chriſt and his Goſpel doth he prove before Councels and Rulers, who even now was daſh't out of countenance by a ſilly maid? and all this the product of Satans temptation ſanctified unto him. Indeed a Saint hath a diſcovery by his fall, what is the prevailing corruption in him, ſo that the temptation doth but ſtir the humour, which the ſoul having found out, hath the greater advantage to evacuate, by applying thoſe means, and uſing thoſe ingredients which do purge that malady *cum delectu*. Now the ſoul ſure will call all out againſt this deſtroyer? *Paul* had not took ſuch pains to *buffet his body*, had he not found Satan knocking at that door. 2.

3. Thirdly, God uſeth theſe temptations for the advancing of the whole work of grace in the heart. One ſpot occaſions the whole garment to be waſhed. *David* overcome with one ſin, renewes his repentance for all, *Pſal.* 51. A good husband when he ſeeth it raine in at one place, ſends for the Workman to look over all the houſe. This indeed differenceth a ſincere heart from an hypocrite, whoſe repentance is partial, ſoft in one plot, and hard in another. *Judas* cries out of his treaſon, but not a word of his thievery and hypocriſie. The hole was no wider in his conſcience then where the bullet went in, whereas true ſorrow for one, breaks the heart into ſhivers for others alſo.

SECT. 2.

2. Secondly, Satan by tempting one Saint hath a miſchievous deſign againſt others, either by encouraging them to ſin by the example of ſuch a one, or diſcouraging them in their holy courſe by the ſcandal he hath given; but God here befooles him.

1. Firſt, making the miſcarriages of ſuch a ſeaſonable caveat to others to look to their ſtanding. Doeſt thou ſee a meek *Moſes* provok't to anger, what watch and ward haſt thou need keep over thy unruly heart? though loud winds do ſome hurt by blowing down here a looſe tyle, and there a turret, (which was falling before,) yet the common good ſurmounts the private damage of ſome few; theſe being as a broom in Gods hand to ſweep and cleanſe the aire: ſo though ſome (that are wicked) are by Gods righteous judgment for the ſame hardened into further abominations by the Saints falls, yet the good which ſincere ſoules receive by having their formality and ſecurity in a further degree purged doth abundantly countervaile the other, who are but ſent a little faſter, whither they were going before.

2. Secondly, God makes his Saints falls an argument for comfort to diſtreſſed conſciences. This hath been, and is as a feather, (when the paſſage ſeems ſo ſtop't, that no comfort can be got down otherwiſe) to drop a little hope into the ſoul, to keep the creature alive from falling into utter deſpair; ſome have been revived

revived with this, when next door to hell in their own fears. *Davids* ſin was great, yet found mercy; *Peter* fell foully, yet now in heaven. Why ſitteſt thou here, O my ſoul, under the hatches of deſpair? Up and call upon thy God for mercy, who hath pardoned the ſame to others.

Thirdly, God hath a deſign in ſuffering Satan to trounce ſome of his Saints by temptation, to train them up into a fitneſſe to ſuccour their fellow-brethren in the like condition: he ſends them hither to ſchool, (where they are under Satans ferular and laſh) that his cruel hand over them may make them ſtudy the Word and their own hearts, by which they get experience of Satans policies till at laſt they commence Maſters in this Art of comforting tempted ſouls. It is an Art by it ſelf, *to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to the weary ſoul*: 'tis not ſerving out an Apprenticeſhip to humane Arts will furniſh a man for this: great Doctors have proved very Dunces here, knowing no more how to handle a wounded conſcience than a Ruſtick the Chyrurgions inſtrument in diſſecting the body when an Anatomy-Lecture is to be read. 'Tis not the knowledge of the Scripture (though a man were as well acquainted with it, as the Apothecary with his pots and glaſſes in his ſhop, able to go directly to any promiſe on a ſudden,) will ſuffice. No, not grace it ſelf, except exerciſed with theſe buffetings and ſoul-conflicts. Chriſt himſelf we find trained up in this ſchool, *Iſa.* 50. 4. *He waketh mine ear to hear as the learned.* Even as the Tutour calls up his Pupil to read to him; and what is the Lecture which is read to Chriſt, that he may have the tongue of the learned to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to the weary ſoul? ſee, *verſe* 5. *The Lord hath opened mine eare, and I was not rebellious, neither turned I away my back, I gave my back to the ſmiters, &c.* His ſufferings (which were all along mingled with temptations,) were the Lecture from which Chriſt came out ſo learned, to reſolve and comfort diſtreſſed ſouls. So that the devil had better have let Chriſt alone, yea, and his Saints alſo, who do him but the greater diſſervice in comforting others; none will handle poor ſouls ſo gently as thoſe, who remember the ſmart of their own heart-ſorrowes; none ſo skilfull in applying the comforts of the Word to wounded conſciences, as thoſe who have layen bleeding themſelves; ſuch know the ſymptomes of ſoul-troubles, and feel

3.

others pains in their own bosomes, which some that know the Scriptures, (for lack of experience) do not, and therefore are like a novice Physician, who perhaps can tell you every plant in the Herbal, yet wanting the practick part, when a Patient comes, knowes not well how to make use of his skill: The Saints experiences help them to a soveraign treacle made of the Scorpions own flesh, (which they through Christ have slain,) and that hath a vertue above all other to expel the venome of *Satans* temptations from the heart.

SECT. 3.

3. Thirdly, Satan in tempting the Saint to sin, labours to make a breach between God and the soul. He hates both, and therefore labours to divide these dear friends. If I can (thinks he) get such a one to sin, God will be angry, and when angry he'll whip his childe soundly, this will be some sport, and when God is correcting the Saint, he'll be questioning the love of God to him, and cooles in his love to God; so though I should not keep him from heaven at last, yet he shall have little joy thither in the way. In this case God and the soul will be like man and wife fallen out; who neither of them look kindly one upon another. Now see how God befooles Satan in both these.

1. First, God useth his Saints temptations, as his method by which he advanceth the communications of his love unto them. The devil thought he had got the goale, when he got *Adam* to eate the forbidden fruit, he thought now he had man in the same predicament with himself, as unlikely ever to see the face of God, as those Apostate spirits; but (alas!) this was by God intended to usher in that great Gospel-plot of saving man by Christ, who (assoon as this Prologue of mans fall is done) is brought upon the stage in that grand Promise of the Gospel made to *Adam*, and at Gods command undertakes the charge of recovering lost man out of *Satans* clutches, and re-instating him in his primitive glory, with an accesse of more than ever man had at first, so that the meanest lilly in Christs field, exceeds *Adam* in all his native Royalty. And as *Satan* sped in his first temptation,

tion, so he is still on the losing hand: what got he by all his paines upon *Job*, but to let that holy man know at last how dearly God loved him? When he foiled *Peter* so shamefully, do we not find Christ owning *Peter* with as much love as ever? *Peter* must be the only Disciple, to whom by name the joyful newes of his resurrection is sent: *Go tell my Disciples and Peter.* As if Christ had said, Be sure let his sad heart be comforted with this newes, that he may know I am friends with him for all his late cowardise.

But doth not this seem to countenance sin, and make Christians heedlesse, whether they fall into temptation or no? If God do thus shew his love to his Saints after their falls and foiles, why should we be so shy of sin, which ends so well at last? Quest.

Two things will prevent the danger of such an inference. Answ.

First, we must distinguish between a soules being foiled through his own infirmity, and his enemyes subtilty and power over-matching him; and another, who through a false heart doth voluntarily prostrate himself to the lust of *Satan*; though a General will shew little pity to a souldier that should traiterously throw down his armes, and run to the enemy, yet if another in fighting receives a wound and be worsted, it will be no dishonour for him to expresse his pity and love, no, though he should send him out of the field in his own coach, lay him in his own bed, and appoint him his own Chirurgion. God doth not encourage wickednesse in his *Saints*, but pityes weaknesse. Even when the *Saints* fall into a sin in its nature presumptuous, they do not commit it so presumptuously as others; there is a part true to God in their bosomes, though over-voted. *Moses* spake unadvisedly, but the devil had his instruments to provoke him, quite against the good mans temper. *David* numbers the people, but see how the devil dogg'd and hunted him, till at last he got the better, 1 *Chron.* 21. 1. *Satan stood up and provoked David to number Israel.* How bravely did *Job* repel *Satans* darts? no wonder if in such a shower some one should get between the joynts of his armour. And for *Peter*, we know (good man) with what a loyal heart, yea, zealous he went into the field, though when the enemy appear'd his heart fail'd him. 1.

Secondly, consider but the way how God communicates his 2.

love

love after his Saints falls, not in sinning, or for sinning, but in mourning and humbling their souls for their sins. Indeed did God smile on them, while acting sinfully, this might strengthen their sin, as wine in a feaver would the disease; but when the fit is off, the venome of the eisease spent, and breathed out in a kindly humiliation, now the creature lies low. Gods wine of comfort is a cordial to the drooping spirit, not fuel for sin. When *David* was led in temptation first, he must be clad in sack-cloth and mourning, and then God takes it off, and puts on the garment of joy and praise, 1 *Chron.* 21. 10, 15. *Job*, though he expresst so much courage and patience, yet (bewraying some infirmities after he was baited long by so many fresh dogs, men and devils) he must cry *peccavi*, and abhor himself in dust and ashes before God will take him into his armes, *Job* 42. 6. and the same way God takes with all his children. Now to his Saints in such a posture, God may with safety to his honour and their good give a larger draught of his love than ordinary; their fears and sorrow which their sin hath cost them, will serve in stead of water to dash this strong wine of joy, and take away its headinesse, that it neither fume up into pride, nor occasion them to reel backward into Apostasie.

Quest. *But why doth God now communicate his love?*

Answ. 1. First, from his own pitiful nature; *You have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.* God loves not to rake in bleeding wounds, he knowes a mourning soul is subject to be discouraged. A frown or an angry look from God, whom the Saint so dearly loves, must needs go near the heart, therefore God declares himself at hand to revive such, *Isa.* 57. 15. and he gives the reason, *verse* 16. *For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wroth, for the spirit should faile before me.* Whose spirit is there meant? not of the presumptuous sinner; he goes on, and never blunks; but of the contrite and humble ones. As the father observes the disposition of his children, one commits a fault and goes on rebelliously, despising his fathers anger, another (when offending him) layes it to heart, refuseth to eat, gets into some corner to lament the displeasure of his father; the father sees it, and his bowels yerne towards him. Indeed should he not put his childe out of feare by discovering his

his love, the ſpirit of ſuch a one would faile; 'tis not poſſible there ſhould be a long breach between ſuch a father and ſuch a ſon, the one relenting over his ſin, the other over his mourning ſonne.

Secondly, God doth thus to poure the greater ſhame upon Satan, who is the great make-bate between God and the ſoul. How is the man aſhamed that hath ſtirr'd up variance between husband and wife, father and ſon, to ſee the breach made up, and all ſet themſelves againſt him? It went ill on Chriſts ſide, when *Herod* and *Pilate* were made friends, and can it go well with Satan to ſee all well between God and his children? If *Eſther* be in favour, *Haman* her enemy ſhall have his face covered. Indeed, this covers Satans face with ſhame, to ſee a poor Saint even now his priſoner, whom he had leave to rob and plunder, tempt and diſquiet, now ſitting in the Sun-ſhine of Gods love, while he like a ravening Lion takes on for the loſſe of his prey. 2.

Secondly, Satans aime is to weaken the Saints faith on God, and cool his love to God, but befool'd in both; for, firſt God turnes their temptations, yea, their falls, to the further eſtabliſhment of their faith, which (like the tree) ſtands ſtronger for its ſhaking, or like the Gyant *Anteus*, who in his wreſtling with *Hercules* is feigned to get ſtrength by every fall to the ground. Falſe faith indeed once foiled, ſeldom comes on again; but true faith riſeth and fights more valiantly, as we ſee in *Peter* and other Scripture-examples. Temptation to faith is as fire to gold, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. The fire doth not only diſcover which is true gold, but makes the true gold more pure; it comes out may be leſſe in bulk and weight, (becauſe ſevered from that ſoile and droſſe which embaſſed it) but more in value and worth. When Satan is bound up, and the Chriſtian walks under the ſhines of divine favour, and encouragement of divine aſſiſtance; his faith may appear great, if compared with another under the withdrawings of God, and buffetings of Satan, but this is not equal judging; as if to try who is biggeſt of two men, we ſhould meaſure one naked, and the other over his clothes; or in comparing two pieces of gold, weigh one with the droſſe and dirt it contracts in the purſe, with the other purged from theſe in the fire; faith before temptation hath much heterogeneal ſtuffe that cleaves

to it, and goes for faith; but when temptation comes, these are discovered. Now the Christian feels corruption stir, which lay as dead before, now a cloud comes between the soul and the sweet face of God, (the sense of which latter, and the little sense of the other bore up his faith before) but these bladders prick't, he comes now to learne the true stroke in this heavenly Art of swimming on the promise, having nothing else to bear him up but that; and a little of this carryes more of the precious nature of faith in it, than all the other; yea, is (like *Gideons* handful of men) stronger, when all these accessaries to faith are sent away, than when they were present; and here is all the devil gets: in stead of destroying his faith which he aimes at, he is the occasion of the refining of it, and thereby adding to its strength.

2. Secondly, the love of tempted Saints is enkindled to Christ by their temptations, and foiles in their temptations. Possibly in the fit there may seem a damp upon their love, as when water is first sprinkled upon the fire, but when the Conflict is a little over, and the Christian comes to himselfe, his love to Christ will break out like a vehement flame; First, the shame and sorrow which a gracious soul must needs feele in his bosome for his sinful miscarriage, while under the temptation, will provoke him to expresse his love to Christ above others, as is sweetly set forth in the Spouse, who when the cold fit of her distemper was off, and the temptation over, bestirs her to purpose, her lazy sicknesse is turned to love-sicknesse: she findes it as hard now to sit, as she did before to rise: she can rest in no place out of her Beloveds sight, but runs and asks every one she meets for him; and whence came all this vehemency of her zeal? all occasioned by her undutiful carriage to her husband: she parted so unkindly with him, that (bethinking what she had done) away she goes to make her peace. If sins committed in unregeneracy have such a force upon a gracious soul, that the thought of them, though pardoned, will still break and melt the heart into sorrow, (as we see in *Magdalen*) and prick on to shew zeal for God above others, (as in *Paul*) how much more will the sins of a Saint, who after sweet acquaintance with Jesus Christ lifts up the heel against that bosome where he hath layen, affect, yea, dissolve the heart as into so many drops of water, and

and that ſorrow provoke him to ſerve God at a higher rate than others? No childe ſo dutiful in all the family, as he who is return'd from his rebellion. Again ſecondly, as his own ſhame, ſo the experience which ſuch a one hath of Chriſts love above others will encreaſe his love. Chriſts love is fuel to ours. *Ex iiſdem nutrimur quibus conſtamus*; as it gives its being, ſo it affords growth: It is both Mother and Nurſe to our love. The more Chriſt puts forth his love, the more heat our love gets, and next to Chriſts dying love, none greater than his ſuccouring love in temptation. The Mother never hath ſuch advantage to ſhew her affection to her childe, as when in diſtreſſe, ſick, poor or impriſoned; ſo neither hath Chriſt to his children as when tempted, yea, worſted by temptation. When his children lye in Satans priſon, bleeding under the wounds of their conſciences, this is the ſeaſon he takes to give an experiment of his tender heart in pitying, his faithfulneſſe in praying for them, his mindfulneſſe in ſending ſuccour to them, yea, his dear love in viſiting them by his comforting Spirit. Now when the ſoul hath got off ſome great temptation, and reades the whole hiſtory thereof together, (wherein he findes what his own weakneſſe was to reſiſt Satan, nay, his unfaithfulneſſe in complying with Satan, which might have provok't Chriſt to leave him to the fury of Satan) now to ſee both his folly pardoned, and ruine graciouſly prevented, and that by no other hand, but Chriſts coming into his reſcue. (as *Abiſhai* to *David*, when that gyant thought to have ſlaine him.) This muſt needs exceedingly endear Chriſt to the ſoul. At the reading of ſuch records the Chriſtian cannot but enquire, (as *Ahaſhuerus* concerning *Mordecai*, who by diſcovering a treaſon had ſaved the Kings life,) what honour hath been done to his ſweet Saviour for all this. And thus Jeſus Chriſt, whom Satan thought to bring out of the ſouls favour, and liking, comes in the end to ſit higher and ſurer in the Saints affections than ever.

2 Sam. 21.

CHAP. X.

A brief Application of the Point in two Branches.

Use 1. THis affords a reason why God suffers his dear children to fall into temptation, because he is able to out-shoot Satan in his own bowe, and in the thing wherein he thinks to outwit the Christian to be above him. God will not only be admired by his Saints in glory for his love in their salvation, but for his wisdome in the way to it. The love of God in saving them will be the sweet draught at the marriage-feast, and the rare wisdome of God in effecting this, as the curious workmanship with which the cup shall be enamel'd. Now wisdome appears most in untying knots, and wading through difficulties. The more crosse wards there are in a busineſſe, the more wisdome to fit a key to the lock, to make choice of such means as shall meet with the several turnings in the same. On purpose therefore doth God suffer such temptations to intervene, that his wisdom may be the more admired in opening all these, and leading his Saints that way to glory, by which Satan thought to have brought them to hell. The *Israelites* are bid *remember all the way that God led them in the wilderneſſe for fourty years*, Deut. 8. 2. The History of these warres (Christian) will be pleasant to read in heaven, though bloody to fight on earth. *Moses* and *Elias* talk't with Christ on *Tabor*, (an Embleme of the sweet communion which shall passe between Christ and his Saints in glory,) and what was their talk, *Luke* 9. 30. but of his death and sufferings? It seems a discourse of our sufferings and temptations, are not too low a subject for that blisseful state. Indeed this left out, would make a blemish in the faire face of Heavens glory. Could the damned forget the way they went into hell, how oft the Spirit of God was wooing, and how far they were overcome by the conviction of it; in a word, how many turns and returns there were in their journey forward and backward, what possibilities, yea, probabilities they had for heaven, when on earth; were but some hand so kind as to blot these tormenting

ing paſſages out of their memories, it would eaſe them wonderfully. So were it poſſible glorified Saints could forget the way, wherein they went to glory, and the ſeveral dangers that interven'd from Satan, and their own back-ſliding hearts, they and their God too would be loſers by it, I mean in regard of his manifeſtative glory. What is the glory wherein God appears at *Zions* deliverance? thoſe royal garments of ſalvation, that make him ſo admired of men and Angels? but the celebration of all his attributes, according to what every one hath done towards their ſalvation. Now wiſdom being that which the creature chiefly gloryes in, (and choſeth by Satan for his firſt bait, who made *Eve* believe ſhe ſhould be like God in knowledge and wiſdome) therefore God, to give Satan the more ſhameful fall, gives him leave to uſe his wits and wiles in tempting and troubling his children, in which lyes his great advantage over the Saints, that ſo the way to his own Throne (where his wiſdome ſhall at laſt, as well as his mercy ſit in all its Royalty) may be paved with the ſculls (as I may ſo ſpeak) of devils.

Secondly, this gives a ſtrong cordial to our fainting faith, in the behalf of the Church of Chriſt. If all the devils wits and wiles will not ſerve him to overcome one ſingle ſouldier in Chriſts Camp, much leſſe ſhall he ever ruine the whole Army. Theſe are dayes of great confuſions in the Chriſtian world, and the chief feare of a gracious heart is for the *Ark*, leſt that ſhould fall into the enemyes hand, (and when this *Palladium* is taken, the City of God (his Church,) be trod under the feet of pride,) I confeſſe Satan ſeems to get ground daily; he hath ſtrangely wrigled into the boſomes and principles of many, who by the fame of their Profeſſion and zeal, had obtained in the opinion of others to be reckoned among the chief of Chriſts Worthies in their generation. He hath ſadly corrupted the truths of Chriſt, brought a diſ-eſteem on Ordinances, (that by this, and as a judgment for this, the wombe of the Goſpel is become in a great meaſure barren, and her children which hang upon her breaſts, thrive not in love and holineſſe as of old, when the milk was not ſo much, nor that ſo ſpiritful) he hath had advantage by the diviſions of the godly, to harden thoſe that are wicked into a further diſdain of Religion, and by the bloody wars of late yeares,

to boile up the wrath of the Popiſh and profane crue to a higher pitch of rage and fury againſt Chriſts little remnant than ever: ſo that if ever God ſhould ſuffer the ſword to fall into their hand, they are diſciplin'd and fitted to play the bloody butchers on Chriſts ſheep above their fore-fathers, (neither are they ſo creſt-fallen, but that they can hope for ſuch a day, yea, take up ſome of thoſe joyes upon truſt afore-hand to ſolace themſelves, while the reſt follow.) And now (Chriſtian) may be their confidence, together with the deſtracted ſtate of Chriſts affaires in the world, may diſcompoſe thy Spirit, concerning the iſſue of theſe rolling Providences that are over our heads, but be ſtill, poor heart, and know that the conteſt is not between the Church and Satan, but between Chriſt and him. Theſe are the two Champions. Stand now, O ye Army of Saints, ſtill by faith, to ſee the All-wiſe God wreſtle with a ſubtile devil. If you live not to ſee the period of theſe great confuſions, yet generations after you ſhall behold the Almighty ſmite off this *Goliah's* head with his own ſword, and take this cunning hunter in the toile of his own policies, that faith which aſcribes greatneſſe and wiſdom to God, will ſhrink up Satans ſubtilty into a *nigrum nihil*, a thing of nothing. *Increduli timent diabolum, quaſi leonem, qui fide fortes deſpiciunt quaſi vermiculum. Bern.* Unbelief feares Satan as a Lion, faith treads on him as a worme. Behold therefore thy God at work, and promiſe thy ſelfe that what he is about, will be an excellent piece. None can drive him from his work. The Pilot is beaten from the helme, and can do little in a ſtorme, but lets the ſhip go a drift. The Architect cannot work, when night drawes the curtaine, yea, is driven off the Scaffold with a ſtorme of raine, ſuch Workmen are the wiſeſt Counſellours and mightieſt Princes on earth. A pinch may come, when it is as vain to ſay, Help O King, as, Help O beggar; mans wiſdom may be levell'd with folly, but God is never interrupted. All the plots of hell and commotions on earth, have not ſo much as ſhak't Gods hand, to ſpoile one letter or line that he hath been drawing. The myſteriouſneſſe of his Providence may hang a curtain before his work, that we cannot ſee what he is doing, but then *when darkneſſe is about him, righteouſneſſe is the ſeat of his Throne for ever.* O, where's our faith (Sirs!) let God be wiſe, and all men and devils fools. What though thou ſeeſt a *Babel* more likely to go

up

up, then a *Babylon* to be pull'd down, yet believe God is making his ſecret approaches, and will clap his ladders on a ſudden to the walls thereof: Suppoſe truth were Priſoner with *Joſeph*, and errour the Courtier, to have its head lift up by the favour of the times, yet doeſt not remember that the way to truths preferment lyes through the priſon? yea, what though the Church were like *Jonah* in the Whales belly, ſwallowed up to the eye of reaſon by the fury of men, yet doeſt not remember the Whale had not power to digeſt the Prophet? O be not too quick to bury the Church before ſhe be dead. Stay while Chriſt tryes his skill before you give it over: bring Chriſt by your prayers to its grave, to ſpeak a Reſurrection-word. Admirable hath the Saints faith been in ſuch ſtraits: as *Joſephs*, who pawn'd his bones that God would viſit his brethren, willing them to lay him where he believ'd they ſhould be brought; *Jeremiah* purchaſeth a field of his Uncle, and payes down the money for it, and this when the *Caldean* army quartered about *Jeruſalem*, ready to take the City, and carry him with the reſt into *Babylon*: And all this by Gods appointment, *Jer.* 22. 6, 7, 8. that he might ſhew the Jewes by this, how undoubtedly he (in that ſad juncture of time) did believe the performance of the Promiſe for their returne out of captivity. Indeed God counts himſelf exceedingly diſparaged in the thoughts of his people, (though at the loweſt ebbe of his Churches affairs) if his naked word, and the ſingle bond of his Promiſe will not be taken as ſufficient ſecurity to their faith for its deliverance.

VERSE 12.

For we wreſtle not againſt fleſh and blood, but againſt Principalityes and Powers, againſt the Rulers of the darkneſſe of this world, againſt ſpiritual wickedneſſe in high places.

THe words are coupled to the Precedent with that cauſal particle *For*, which either referres to the two foregoing verſes, and

and then they are a further reaſon, preſſing the neceſſity of Chriſtian fortitude in the tenth verſe, and furniture in the eleventh: or elſe to the laſt words of the eleventh verſe, where the Apoſtle having diſcried the Saints grand enemy to be Satan, and deſcribed him in one of his attributes, his wily ſubtilty, he in this further diſplayes him in his proper colours, not to weaken the Saints hands, but waken their care, that ſeeing their enemy marching up in a full body, they might ſtand in better order to receive his charge. Where by the way we may obſerve the Apoſtles ſimplicity and plain dealing; he doth not undervalue the ſtrength of the enemy, and repreſent him inconſiderable, as Captains uſe to keep their ſouldiers together, by ſlighting the power of their adverſary; no, he tells them the worſt at firſt. If Satan had been to ſet out his own power, he could have challeng'd no more than is here granted him. See here the difference between Chriſt dealing with his followers, and Satan with his. Satan dares not let ſinners know who that God is they fight againſt; this were enough to breed a mutiny in the devils camp. Silly ſouls they are drawn into the field by a falſe report of God and his wayes, and are kept there together with lyes and faire tales, but Chriſt is not afraid to ſhew his Saints their enemy in all his Power and Principality, the Weakneſſe of God being ſtronger than the powers of hell.

CHAP. I.

Sheweth, the Chriſtians life here to be a continual wreſtling with ſin and Satan, and the paucity of thoſe who are true Wreſtlers, as alſo how the true Wreſtlers ſhould manage their combate.

THe words contain a lively deſcription of a bloody and laſting war between the Chriſtian and his implacable enemy; in which we may obſerve; Firſt, the Chriſtians ſtate in this life, ſet out by this word *wreſtling*.

Secondly, the Aſſailants that appear in armes againſt the Chriſtian, who are deſcribed; Firſt, Negatively, *Not fleſh and blood.*

blood: Or rather comparatively, not chiefly flesh and blood. Secondly, positively, *but against Principalities, Powers, &c.*

SECT. 1.

First, for the first, the wrestling or conflicting state of a Christian in this life, is rendered observable here by a threefold circumstance.

First, the kind of combate which the Christians state is here set out by, ἔστιν ἡμῖν ἡ πάλη, which though it be used sometimes for a wrestling of sport and recreation, yet here to set out the sharpnesse of the Christians encounter; there are two things in wrestling that render it a sharper combate than others. First, wrestling is not properly fighting against a multitude, but when one enemy singles out another, and enters the List with him, each exerting their whole force and strength against one another, as *David* and *Goliah*, when the whole Armies stood as it were in a ring to behold the bloody issue of that Duel. Now this is more fierce than to fight in an army, where though the battel be sharp and long, the Souldier is not alwayes engaged, but falls off when he hath discharged, and takes breath a while: yea, possibly may escape without hurt or stroak, because there the enemies aim is not at this or that man, but at the whole heap, but in wrestling one cannot scape so, he being the particular object of the enemies fury, must needs be shaked and tried to purpose. Indeed the word πάλη signifies such a strife, as makes the body shake again, *quia corpus* πάλλεται. Satan hath not only a general malice against the Army of Saints, but a spite against thee *John*, thee *Joane*: he'll single thee out for his enemy. We finde *Jacob*, when alone, a man wrestled with him. As God delights to have private communion with his single Saints, so the devil to try it hand to hand with the Christian, when he gets him alone. As we lose much comfort, when we do not apply the Promise and Providence of God to our particular persons and conditions, God loves me, pardons me, takes care of me: the water at the Town-conduit doth me no good, if I want a pipe to empty it into my cistern; so it obstructs our care and watchfulnesse, when we conceive of Satans wrath and

fury, as bent in general against the Saints, and not against me in particular. O how careful would a soul be in duty, if as going to Church or Closet he had such a serious meditation as this, Now Satan is at my heels to hinder me in my work, if my God help me not!

2. Secondly, 'tis a close combate. Armies fight at some distance. Wrestlers grapple hand to hand. An arrow shot from afar may be seen and shunn'd, but when the enemy hath hold of one there is no declining, but either he must resist manfully, or fall shamefully at his enemies foot. Satan comes close up, and gets within the Christian, takes his hold of his very flesh and corrupt nature, and by this shakes him.

2. Secondly, the universality of the combate. We wrestle ἡμῖν πάλη, which comprehends all, on purpose you may perceive the Apostle changeth the pronoune ὑμᾶς in the former verse, into ἡμῖν in this, that he may include himselfe as well as them; as if he had said, the quarrel is with every Saint. Satan neither feares to assault the Minister, nor despiseth to wrestle with the meanest Saint in the Congregation; great and small, Minister and people, all must wrestle: Not one part of Christs Army in the field, and the other at ease in their quarters, where no enemy comes; here are enemies enough to engage all at once.

3. Thirdly, the permanency or duration of this combate, and that lyes in the tense ἔστιν ἡμῖν πάλη. Not, our wrestling was at first Conversion, but now over, and we past the pikes; not, we shall wrestle when sickness comes, and death comes, but our wrestling is; the enemy is ever in sight of us, yea, in fight with us, there is an evil of every dayes temptation, which (like *Pauls* bonds,) abides us whereever we become. So that these particulars summ'd up will amount to this Point:

SECT. 2.

Doct. The Christians life is a continual wrestling. He is as *Jeremy* said of himselfe, borne *a man of strife*, or what the Prophet to *Asa* may be said to every Christian; *From hence thou shalt have wars*, from thy spiritual birth to thy natural death, from the houre when thou first diddest set thy face to haven, till thou shalt

ſhalt ſet thy foot in heaven. *Iſraels* march out of *Egypt* was in Goſpel-ſenſe our taking the field againſt ſinne and Satan, and when had they peace? not till they lodged their colours in *Canaan*. *No condition* wherein the Chriſtian is here below is quiet. Is it proſperity or adverſity, here is work for both hands to keep pride and ſecurity down in the one, faith and patience up in the other: no place which the Chriſtian can call priviledg'd ground. *Lot* in *Sodom* wreſtled with the wicked inhabitants thereof, his *righteous ſoul being vexed with their unclean converſation*. And how fares he at *Zoar*? do not his own daughters bring a ſpark of *Sodoms* fire into his own bed, whereby he is inflamed with luſt? Some have thought if they were but in ſuch a family, under ſuch a Miniſtry, out of ſuch occaſions: O then they ſhould never be tempted as now they are; I confeſſe change of aire is a great help to weak nature, and theſe forenamed as vantage-ground againſt Satan; but think'ſt thou to flye from Satans preſence thus? No, though thou ſhould'ſt take the wings of the morning he would flye after thee, theſe may make him change his method in tempting, but not lay down his deſigne; ſo long as his old friend is alive within, he will be knocking at thy door without. *No duty* can be performed without wreſtling; The Chriſtian needs his ſword as much as his trowel. He wreſtles with a body of fleſh; this to the Chriſtian in duty is as the beaſt to the traveller, he cannot go his journey without it, and much ado to go with it. If the fleſh be kept high and luſty, then 'tis wanton and will not obey; if low, then it's weak and ſoon tires: Thus the Chriſtian rids but little ground, becauſe he muſt go his weak bodyes pace. He wreſtles with a body of ſin as well as of fleſh, this mutters and murmures when the ſoul is taking up any duty. Sometimes it keeps the Chriſtian from duty, ſo that he cannot do what he would. As *Paul* ſaid, *I would have come once and again, but Satan hindred me*. I would have prayed may the Chriſtian ſay at ſuch a time, and meditated on the Word I heard, the mercies I received at another, but this enemy hindred. 'Tis true indeed, grace ſwayes the Scepter in ſuch a ſoul, yet as Schoolboyes taking their time when their Maſter is abroad do ſhut him out, and for a while lord it in miſrule, though they are whipt for it afterwards: thus the unregenerate part takes advantage when grace is not on its watch to diſturb its government,

and shut it out from duty, though this at last makes the soul more severe in mortifying, yet it costs some scuffle before it can recover its Throne, and when it cannot shut from duty, yet then is the Christian wofully yok't with it in duty; it cannot do what it doth as it would; many a letter in its copy doth this enemy spoil, while he jogs him with impertinent thoughts; when the Christian is a praying, then Satan and the flesh are a prating; he cryes, and they louder, to put him out, or drown his cry. Thus we see the Christian is assail'd on every side by his enemy; and how can it be other, when the seeds of war are laid deep in the natures of both, which can never be rooted up till the devil cease to be a devil, sin to be sin, and the Saint to be a Saint? Though wolves may snarle at one another, yet soon are quiet again, because the quarrel is not in their nature; but the Wolfe and the Lamb can never be made friends. Sin will lust against grace, and grace draw upon sin whenever they meet.

SECT. III.

Use 1. First, this may reprove such as wrestle, but against whom? against God, not against sin and Satan. These are bold men indeed, who dare try a fall with the Almighty; yet such there are, and a Wo pronounced against them, *Isa.* 45. 9. *Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker.* 'Tis easie to tell which of these will be worsted. What can he do, but break his shins that dasheth them against a rock? A goodly battel there is like to be, when thorns contest with fire, and stubble with flame. But where live those Giants, that dare enter the List with the great God? what are their names that we may know them, and brand them for creatures above all other unworthy to live? Take heed, O thou who askest, that the wretched man whom thou seemest so to defie, be not found in thy own clothes it self. *Judas* was the Traitour, though he would not answer to his name, but put it off with a *Master, is it I?* and so mayest thou be the fighter against God. The heart is deceitful. Even holy *David*, for all his anger was so hot against the rich man, that took away the poor mans Ewe-Lamb, that he bound it with an oath, the man should not live:

who,

who had done it, yet proves at laſt to be himſelf the man, as the Prophet told him, 2 *Sam.* 12.

Now there are two wayes wherein men wreſtle againſt God; Firſt, when they wreſtle againſt his Spirit. Secondly, when they wreſtle againſt his Providence.

Firſt, when they wreſtle againſt his Spirit. We read of the Spirits ſtriving with the creature, *Gen.* 6. 3. *My Spirit ſhall not alwayes ſtrive with man.* Where the ſtriving is not in anger and wrath to deſtroy them, (that God could do without any ſtir or ſcuffle) but a loving ſtrife and conteſt with man. The old world was running with ſuch a carier headlong into their ruine, he ſends his Spirit to interpoſe, and by his counſels and reproofs to offer, as it were, to ſtop them and reclaim them. As if one ſeeing another ready to offer violence on himſelf, ſhould ſtrive to get the knife out of his hand, with which he would do the miſchief. Or one that hath a purſe of gold in his hand to give, ſhould follow another by all manner of entreaties, ſtriving with him to accept and take it. Such a kind of ſtrife is this of the Spirits with men. They are the luſts of men, (thoſe bloody inſtruments of death, with which ſinners are miſchieving themſelves) that the holy Spirit ſtrives by his ſweet counſels and entreaties to get out of our hands. They are Chriſts, his grace and eternal life he ſtrives to make us accept at the hands of Gods mercy; and for repulſing the Spirit thus ſtriving with them, ſinners are juſtly counted fighters againſt God: *Ye ſtiff-necked, and uncircumciſed in heart and ears, ye do alwayes reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt.* Acts 7. 51. Now there is a twofold ſtriving of the Spirit, and ſo of our wreſtling againſt it. Firſt, the Spirit ſtrives in his meſſengers with ſinners. They coming on his errand, and not their own; he voucheth the faithful counſels, reproofs and exhortations which they give as his own act. *Noah*, that *Preacher of righteouſneſſe*, what he ſaid to the old world, is call'd, *the Preaching of the Spirit*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. The pains that *Moſes*, *Aaron* and other ſervants of God took in inſtructing *Iſrael*, is call'd the inſtruction of the Spirit, *Nehem.* 9. 20. So that when the Word, which Gods Miniſters bring in his Name, is rejected, the faithful counſels they give are thrown at ſinners heels and made light of; then do they ſtrive with the Spirit, and wreſtle againſt Chriſt as really, as if he viſibly in his own Perſon had been in the Pulpit, and

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preached the ſame Sermon to them. When God comes to reckon with ſinners, it will prove ſo; then God will rub up your memories, and minde you of his ſtriving with you, and your unkinde reſiſting him. *They, whether they will heare, or whether they will forbear, ſhall know they had a Prophet among them.* Now men ſoon forget whom and what they hear; ask them what was preſt upon their conſcience in ſuch a Sermon, they have forgot; what were the precious truths laid out in another, and they are loſt: and well were it for them if their memories were no better in another world: it would eaſe their torments more than a little. But then they ſhall know they had a Prophet among them, and what a price they had with him in their hands, though it was in fooles keeping. They ſhall know what he was, and what he ſaid, though a thouſand years paſt, as freſh as if it were done but laſt night. The more zealous and compaſſionate, the more painful and powerful he was in his place, the greater ſhall their ſin be found, to break from ſuch holy violence offered to do them good. Surely God will have ſomething for the ſweat, yea, lives of his ſervants which were worne out in ſtriving with ſuch rebellious ones. May be yet, ſinners, your firmament is clear, no cloud to be ſeen that portends a ſtorme; but know (as you uſe to ſay) winter does not rot in the clouds, you ſhall have it at laſt: every threatning which your faithful Miniſters have denounced againſt you out of the Word, God is bound to make good. *He confirmeth the Word of his ſervant, and performeth the counſel of his meſſengers*, and that in judgement againſt ſinners, confirming the threatnings, as well as in mercy performing the promiſes, which they declare as the portion of his children. But it will be time enough to ask ſuch on a ſick-bed, or a dying houre, whether the words of the Lord delivered by their faithful Preachers have not taken hold of them. Some have confeſſed with horrour they have, as the Jewes, *Zech.* 1. 6. *Like as the Lord of hoſts thought to do unto us, ſo hath he dealt with us.* Secondly, the Spirit ſtrives with men more immediately, when he makes his inward approaches to the conſciences of men, debating in their own boſomes the caſe with them; one while he ſhews them their ſins in their bloody colours, and whether they will ſurely bring them, if not look't to timely, which he doth ſo convincingly, that the creature ſmells ſometimes the very fire and brimſtone

Ezek. 2. 5.

Iſa. 44. 26.

brimſtone about him, and is at preſent in a temporary hell; another while he falls a parlying and treating with them, making gracious overtures to the ſinner, if he will return at his reproof, preſents the grace of the Goſpel, and opens a door of hope for his recovery, yea, falls a wooing and beſeeching of him to throw down his rebellious armes, and come to Chriſt for life, whoſe heart is in a preſent diſpoſition to receive and embrace the firſt motion the returning ſinner makes for mercy. Now when the Spirit of God followes the ſinner from place to place, and time to time, ſuggeſting ſuch motions, and renewing his old ſuit, and the creature ſhall fling out of the Spirits hands thus ſtriving with him *reinfectâ*, as far from renouncing his luſts, or taking any liking to Chriſt as ever: This is to reſiſt the Spirit to his face, and it carryes ſo much malignity in it, that (even where it hath not been final) poor humbled ſouls have been ſo over-ſet with the horrour of it, that they could not for a long time be perſwaded, but that it was the unpardonable ſin. Take heed therefore ſinners, how you uſe the Spirit when he comes, knocking at the door of your hearts: Open at his knock, and he will be your gueſt, you ſhall have his ſweet company; repulſe him, and you have not a Promiſe he'll knock againe. And if once he leave ſtriving with thee, unhappy man, thou art loſt for ever; thou lieſt like a ſhip caſt up by the waves upon ſome high rock, where the tide never comes to fetch it off. Thou mayeſt come to the Word, converſe with other Ordinances, but in vain. 'Tis the Spirit in them, which is both tyde and winde, to ſet the ſoul afloat, and carry it on, or elſe it lyes like a ſhip on dry ground which ſtirs not.

Secondly, we wreſtle againſt God when we wreſtle with his Providence, and that two wayes; Firſt, when we are diſcontented with his providential diſpoſure of us. Gods carving for us doth not pleaſe us ſo, but that we are objecting againſt his dealings towards us, at leaſt muttering ſomething with the fool in our hearts, which God heares as lightly as man our words. God counts then we begin to quarrel with him, when we do not acquieſce in, and ſay Amen to his Providence whatever it is. He calls it *a contending with the Almighty*, *Iob* 40. 1. yea, *a reproving of God*. And he is a bold man ſure that dare finde fault with God, and article againſt heaven. God challengeth him,

who-

whoever he is that doth this, to anſwer it at his peril. *He that reproveth God, let him anſwer it*, v. 2. of the chapter fore-mentioned. It was high time for *Job* to have done, when he hears what a ſenſe God puts upon thoſe unwary words, which drop't from him in the anguiſh of his ſpirit, and paroxyſme of his ſufferings; contend with the Almighty? reprove God? Good man, how blank he is, and cries out, *I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* Let God but pardon what is paſt, and he ſhall hear ſuch language no more. O Sirs, take heed of this wreſtling above all other. Contention is uncomfortable, with whomſoever it is we fall out. Neighbours or friends, wife or husband, children or ſervants: but worſt of all with God. If God cannot pleaſe thee, but thy heart riſeth againſt him, what hopes are there of thy pleaſing him, who will take nothing kindly from that man who is angry with him? And how can love to God be preſerved in a diſcontented heart, that is alwayes muttering againſt him? Love cannot think any evil of God, nor endure to hear any ſpeak evil of him, but it muſt take Gods part, as *Jonathan Davids*, when *Saul* ſpake baſely of him, and when it cannot be heard, will like him ariſe and be gone. When afflicted, love can allow thee to groan, but not to grumble. If thou wilt eaſe thy incumbred ſpirit into Gods boſome by prayer, and humbly wreſtle with God on thy knees, love is for thee, and will help thee to the beſt arguments thou canſt uſe to God: But if thou wilt vent thy diſtempered paſſions, and ſhew a mutinous ſpirit againſt God, this ſtabs it to the heart.

Secondly, we wreſtle againſt Providence, when uncorrigible under the various diſpenſations of God towards us. Providence has a voice, if we had an ear; mercies ſhould draw, afflictions drive; now when neither fair means nor foul do us good, but we are impenitent under both; this is to wreſtle againſt God with both hands. Either of theſe have their peculiar aggravations. One is againſt love, and ſo diſ-ingenuous; the other is againſt the ſmart of his rod, and therein we ſlight his anger, and are cruel to our ſelves in kicking againſt the pricks. Mercy ſhould make us aſhamed, wrath afraid to ſin. He that is not aſhamed, has not the ſpirit of a man. He that is not afraid when ſmitten, is worſe than the beaſt, who ſtands in aw of whip and ſpur. Sometimes mercy (eſpecially theſe outward mercies, which have

have a pleasing relish to the carnal part in a Christian) hath prov'd a snare to the best of men, but then affliction useth to recover them; but when affliction makes men worse, and they harden themselves against God, to sin more and more while the rod is on them, what is like to reclaim them? few are made better by prosperity, whom afflictions make worse. He that will sin, though he goes in pain, will much more if that once be gone. But take heed of thus contesting with God. There is nothing got by scuffling with God, but blows, or worse. If he say he will afflict thee no more, 'tis even the worst he can say; 'tis as much as if he should say he'll be in thy debt till another world, and there pay thee altogether. But if he means thee mercy, thou shalt hear from him in some sharper affliction than ever. He hath wedges that can rive thee, wert thou a more knotty piece than thou art. *Are there yet the treasures of wickedness, and the scant me sure that is abominable?* (* saith God to *Israel*) what uncorrigible, * Mich. 6. 9. though *the Lords voice crieth unto the City*, bidding you *hear the rod, and him that hath appointed it*? See what course God resolves on, *v.* 13. *Therefore will I make thee sick in smiting of thee.* As if he had said, my other Physick I see was too weak, it did not work or turn your stomack, but I will prepare a potion that shall make you sick at heart.

Secondly, it reproves those who seem to wrestle against sin, 2. but not according to the Word of Command that Christ gives. There is a Law in wrestling which must be observ'd, 2 *Tim.* 2. 5. *If a man also strive for Masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully.* He alludes to the Romane games, to which there were Judges appointed to see that no foul play were offered contrary to the Law for wrestling; the prize being denied to such, though they did foil their adversary, which the Apostle improves to make the Christian careful in his war, as being under a stricter Law and Discipline, that requires not only valour to fight, but obedience to fight, by order, and according to the Word of Command: Now few do this that go for great Wrestlers.

First, some while they wrestle against one sin, embrace ano- 1. ther; and in this case 'tis not the person wrestles against sin, but one sin wrestles with another, and 'tis no wonder to see thieves fall out when they come to divide the spoil; Lusts are *divers*,

Tit. 3. 3. and 'tis hard to pleaſe many Maſters, eſpecially when their commands are ſo contrary; when pride bids lay on in bravery, laviſh out in entertainment; covetouſneſſe bids lay up, when malice bids revenge; carnal policy ſaith, conceal thy wrath, though not forgive. When luſt ſends to his whores, hypocriſie pulls him back for ſhame of the world. Now is he Gods Champion that reſiſts one ſin at the command of another, it may be a worſe.

2. Secondly, ſome wreſtle, but they are preſt into the field, not Voluntiers, their ſlaviſh feare ſcares them at preſent from their luſt; ſo that the Combate is rather betwixt their Conſcience and Will, than them and their luſt, Give me ſuch a ſinne ſaith Will; No, ſaith conſcience, it will ſcall'd, and throwes it away. A man may love the wine though he is loath to have his lips burnt. *Hypocrites themſelves are afraid to burne.* In ſuch Combates the Will at laſt prevails, either by bribing the underſtanding to preſent the luſt it deſires in a more pleaſing dreſſe, (that conſcience may not be ſcared with ſuch hideous apparitions of wrath) or by pacifying conſcience with ſome promiſe of repentance for the future, or by forbearing ſome ſin for the preſent, which it can beſt ſpare, thereby to gain the reputation of ſomething like a reformation; Or if all this will not do, then (prompted by the fury of its luſt) the Will proclaims open war againſt conſcience, ſinning in the face of it, like ſome wilde horſe, (impatient of the ſpur which pricks him, and bridle that curbs him) gets the bit between his teeth, and runs with full ſpeed, till at laſt he eaſeth himſelf of his Rider; and then where he ſees fatteſt paſture, no hedge or ditch can withhold him, till in the end you finde him, ſtarving in ſome pound for his treſpaſſe: Thus many ſin at ſuch rate, that conſcience can no longer hold the reines, nor ſit the ſaddle, but is thrown down and laid for dead; and then the wretches range where their luſts can have the fulleſt meal, till at laſt they pay for their ſtollen pleaſures moſt dearly, when conſcience comes to it ſelfe, purſues them, and takes them more ſurely by the throat than ever, never to let them go till it brings them before Gods Tribunal.

3. Thirdly, others wreſtle with ſin, but they do not hate it, and therefore they are favourable to it, and ſeek not the life of ſin as their deadly enemy; theſe wreſtle in jeſt, and not in earneſt; the wounds;

wounds they give ſin one day, are heald by the next. Let men reſolve never ſo ſtrongly againſt ſin, yet it will creep againe into their favour, till the love of ſin be quenched in the heart, and this fire will never dye of it ſelfe, the love of Chriſt muſt quench the love of ſin, as *Jerome* excellently, *Unus amor extinguit alium.* This heavenly fire will indeed put out that flame of hell, which he illuſtrates by *Ahaſhuerus* his carriage to *Vaſhti* his Queen, who in the firſt Chapter makes a decree in all haſte, that ſhe comes no more before him; but when his paſſion is a little down, *chap.* 2. *v.* 1. he begins to relent towards her, which his Councel perceiving, preſently ſeek out for a beautiful Virgin, on whom the *King* might place his love, and take into his royal bed, which done, we hear no more of *Vaſhti*, then and not till then will the ſouls decree ſtand againſt ſin, when the ſoul hath taken Chriſt into his boſome.

SECT. 4.

Secondly, to the Saints, ſeeing your life is a continual wreſtling here on earth, 'tis your wiſdom to ſtudy how you may beſt manage the combate with your worſt enemy, which that you may do, take theſe few directions.

Firſt, look thou goeſt not into the field without thy Second; my meaning is, engage God by prayer to ſtand at thy back; God is in a league offenſive and defenſive with thee, but he looks to be called. Did the *Ephraimites* take it ill, that *Gideon* called not them into the field, and may not God much more? as if thou meanedſt to ſteal a victory before he ſhould know it. Thou haſt more valour than *Moſes*, who would not ſtir without God, no, though he ſent an Angel for his Lieutenant. Thou art wiſer than *Jacob*, who to overcome *Eſau*, now marching up, turnes from him, and falls upon God; he knew if he could wreſtle with God, he might truſt God to deale with his brother. Engage God and the back-door is ſhut, no enemy can come behinde thee, yea, thine enemy ſhall fall before thee. *God turne the counſel of Achitophel into fooliſhneſſe*, ſaith *David*, heaven ſaith Amen to his prayer, and the wretch *hangs himſelf.*

2. Secondly, be very careful of giving thine enemy hand-hold. Wreſtlers ſtrive to faſten upon ſome part or other, which gives them advantage more eaſily to throw their adverſary; to prevent which, they uſed: Firſt, to lay aſide their garments. Secondly, to anoint their bodies. For the firſt, Chriſtian, labour to put off the old man which is moſt perſonal, that corruption, which *David* calls his own iniquity, *Pſalm* 18. 23. This is the skirt which Satan layes hold of, obſerve what it is, and mortifie it daily, then Satan will retreat with ſhame, when he ſees the head of that enemy upon the wall, which ſhould have betrayed thee into his hands. Secondly, the Romane wreſtlers uſed to anoint their bodies, ſo do thou, bathe thy ſoul with the frequent meditation of Chriſts love. Satan will finde little welcome, where Chriſts love dwells, love will kindle love, and that will be as a wall of fire to keep off Satan, it will make thee diſdain the offer of a ſin, and as oyl ſupple thy joynts, and make agile to offend thy enemy. Think how Chriſt wreſtled in thy quarrel, ſin, hell and wrath had all come full mouth upon thee, had not he coped with them in the way. And canſt thou finde in thy heart to requite his love, by betraying his glory into the hands of ſin, by cowardiſe or treachery: ſay not thou loveſt him, ſo long as thou canſt lay thoſe ſins in thy boſome, which pluck't his heart out of his boſome. It were ſtrange if a child ſhould keep, and delight to uſe no other knife, but that wherewith his father was ſtabb'd.

3. Thirdly, improve the advantage thou getteſt at any time wiſely. Sometimes the Chriſtian hath his enemy on the hip, yea, on the ground, can ſet his foot on the very neck of his pride, and throw away his unbelief, as a thing abſurd and unreaſonable; now (as a wiſe wreſtler) fall with all thy weight upon thine enemy; though man think it foul play to ſtrike when his adverſary is down, yet do not thou ſo complement with ſin, as to let it breath or riſe. Take heed thou beeſt not charged of God, as once *Ahab*, for letting go this enemy now in thy hands, whom God hath appointed to deſtruction. Learn a little wiſdome of the Serpents brood, who when they had Chriſt under their foot, never thought they had him ſure enough; no, not when dead, and therefore both ſeal and watch his grave. Thus do thou to hinder the Reſurrection of thy ſin, ſeal it down with ſtronger purpoſes,

purposes, solemn covenants, and watch it by a wakeful circumspect walking.

This is ground of consolation to the weak Christian, who disputes against the truth of his grace, from the inward conflicts and fightings he hath with his lusts, and is ready to say (like *Gideon*, in regard of outward enemies) *If God be with me, why is all this befallen me?* why do I find such struglings in me, provoking me to sin, pulling me back from that which is good? Why doest ask? The answer is soon given, because thou art a Wrestler, not a Conquerour. Thou mistakest the state of a Christian in this life: when one is made a Christian, he is not presently call'd to triumph over his slain enemies, but carried into the field to meet and fight them. The state of grace is the commencing of a war against sin, not the ending of it; rather than thou shalt not have an enemy to wrestle with, God himself will come in a disguise into the field, and appear to be thine enemy. Thus when *Jacob* was alone, a man wrestled with him until breaking of the day; and therefore set thy heart at rest if this be thy scruple: Thy soul may rather take comfort in this, that thou art a wrestler; This strugling within thee, if upon the right ground, and to the right end, doth evidence, there are two Nations within thee, two contrary natures, the one from earth earthly, and the other from heaven heavenly; yea, for thy further comfort know, though thy corrupt nature be the elder, yet it shall serve the younger. *Use 3.*

O how should this make thee (Christian) long to be gone home, where there is none of this stir and scuffle! 'Tis strange, that every hour seems not a day, and every day a year, till death sounds thy joyful retreat, and calls thee off the field, where the bullets flie so thick, and thou art fighting for thy life with thy deadly enemies, to come to Court, where not swords, but palmes are seen in the Saints hands; not drums, but harps; not groanes of bleeding souldiers and wounded consciences, but sweet and ravishing musick is heard of Triumphing Victors carolling the praises of God and the Lamb, through whom they have overcome. Well, Christians, while you are below, comfort your selves with these things; There is a place of Rest remains for the people of God: You do not beat the ayr, but wrestle for a Heaven that is yonder above these clouds; you have your worst first, the best *Use 4.*

will follow. You wreſtle but to win a Crown, and win to wear it, yea wear never to loſe it, which once on none ſhall take off, or put you to the hazard of battel more. Here we overcome to fight again, the battel of one temptation may be over, but the war remaines. What peace can we have, as long as devils can come abroad out of their holes, or any thing of ſinful nature remains in our ſelves unmortified? which will even fight upon its knees, and ſtrike with one arme while the other is cut off; but when death comes, the laſt ſtroak is ſtruck; this good Phyſician will perfectly cure thee of thy ſpiritual blindneſſe and lameneſſe, (as the Martyr told his fellow at the ſtake bloody *Bonner* would do their bodies.) What is it, Chriſtian, which takes away the joy of thy life, but the wreſtlings and combates which this boſome-enemy puts thee to? Is not this the *Peninnah*, that vexing and diſturbing thy ſpirit, hath kept thee off many a ſweet meale, thou mighteſt have had in communion with God and his Saints? or if thou haſt come, hath made thee cover the Altar of God with thy teares and groans? and will it not be a happy hand that cuts the knot, and ſets thee looſe from thy deadneſſe, hypocriſie, pride, and what not, wherewith thou wert yoak't? 'Tis life which is thy loſſe, and death which is thy gaine. Be but willing to endure the rending of this vaile of thy fleſh, and thou art where thou wouldeſt be, out of the reach of ſin, at reſt in the boſome of thy God. And why ſhould a ſhort evil of paine affright thee more, than the deliverance from a continual torment of ſins evil raviſh thee? Some you know have choſe to be cut, rather than to be ground dayly with the ſtone, and yet, may be, their pain comes again, and canſt thou not quietly think of dying, to be delivered from the torment of theſe ſins, never to return more? And yet that is not the half that death doth for thee: Peace is ſweet after war, eaſe after pain; but what tongue can expreſſe what joy, what glory muſt fill the creature at the firſt ſight of God, and that bleſſed company? none but one that dwells there can tell. Did we know more of that bliſſeful ſtate, we Miniſters would finde it as hard a work to perſwade Chriſtians to be willing to live here ſo long, as now it is to perſwade them to be willing to dye ſo ſoon.

CAAP.

CHAP. II.

Wherein is shewed what is meant by flesh and blood, *how the Christian doth not, and how he doth wrestle against the same.*

SECT. 1.

NOw followes the description of the Saints enemies, with whom he is to wrestle;

First, described Negatively, *Not with flesh and blood.*

Secondly, Positively, *But against Principalities and Powers, &c.*

First, for the Negative part of the Description; we are not to take it for a pure negation, as if we had no conflict with flesh and blood, but wholly and solely to engage against Satan; but by way of comparison, not only with flesh and blood, and in some sense not chiefly. It is usual in Scripture such manner of phrase, *Luke* 14. 12. *Call not thy friends to dinner, but the poore*; that is, not only those, so as to neglect the poor. Now what is meant here by flesh and blood? there is a double interpretation of the words.

First, by flesh and blood may be meant our own bosome-corruptions; that sin which is in our corrupt nature so oft called flesh in the Scripture; *The flesh lusteth against the Spirit*, and sometimes flesh and blood, as *Matth.* 16. 17. *Flesh and blood hath not revealed this*, that is, this Confession thou hast made comes from above? thy fleshly corrupt minde could never have found out this supernatural truth, thy sinful Will would never have embraced it. So, 1 *Cor.* 15. 20. *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdome of God*, that is, sinful mortal flesh, as it's expounded in the words following. So, *Gal.* 1. 21. I consulted not with flesh and blood, that is, carnal reason. Now this bosome-enemy may be called flesh, partly from its derivation, and partly from its operation; from its derivation, becaus. its derived

and

and propagated to us by natural generation; thus *Adam* is said to beget *a son in his own likeness*, sinful as he was, as well as mortal and miserable: yea, the holiest Saint on earth having flesh in him, derives this corrupt and sinful nature to his childe, as the circumcised Jew begat an uncircumcised childe; and the wheat cleans'd and fann'd (being sowen) comes up with a husk, *John* 3. 6. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh.*

Secondly, its call'd flesh from the operations of this corrupt nature, which are fleshly and carnal; The reasonings of the corrupt minde fleshly, therefore called the carnal mind, uncapable indeed of the things of God, which it neither doth nor can perceive: As the Sun doth *obsignare superiora dum revelat inferiora*; hide the Heavens which are above it from us, while it reveales things beneath; so carnal reason leaves the creature in the dark concerning spiritual truths, when it is most able to conceive and discourse of creature-excellencies, and carnal interests here below. What a childish question, for so wise a man did *Nicodemus* put to Christ? though Christ to help him did wrap his speech in a carnal phrase. If fleshly reason cannot understand spiritual truths when thus accommodated, and the notions of the Gospel translated into its own language, what skill is it like to have of them, if put to read them in their original tongue? I mean, if this garment of carnal expression were taken off, and spiritual truths in their naked hue presented to its view. The motions of the natural will are carnal, and therefore, *Rom.* 8. 5. *They that are after the flesh*, are said to *mind the things of the flesh.* All its desires, delights, cares, fears, are in and of carnal things; it savours spiritual food no more than an Angel fleshly. *Omnis vita gustu ducitur*: What we cannot relish we will hardly make out daily food. Every creature hath its proper diet, the Lion eats not grasse, nor the horse flesh; what is food to the carnal heart, is poison to the gracious; and that which is pleasing to the gracious, is distastful to the carnal. Now according to this Interpretation the sense of the Apostle is not, as if the Christian had no combate with his corrupt nature, (for in another place it's said, the spirit lusts against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit, and this enemy is called Heb. 12. 1. ἁμαρτία εὐπερίστατος, the sin that besets the Christian round) but to aggravate his conflict with this enemy by the accesse of a for-

forreign power, Satan who strikes in with this domestick enemy. As if while a King is fighting with his own mutinous subjects, some out-landish troops should joyn with them, now he may be said not to fight with his subjects, but with a forrein power. The Christian wrestles not with his naked corruption, but with Satan in them; were there no devil, yet we should have our hands full in resisting the corruptions of our own hearts, but the accesse of this enemy makes the battel more terrible, because he heads them who is a Captain so skilful and experienced. Our sin is the Engine, Satan is the Engineer; lust the bait, Satan the Angler: when a Soul is enticed by his own lust, he is said to be tempted, *James* 1. 14. because both Satan and our own lust concur to the compleating the sin.

First, let this make thee, Christian, ply the work of mortification close; it is no policy to let thy lusts have arms, who are sure to rise and declare against thee when thine enemy comes. *Achish* his Nobles did but wisely, in that they would not trust *David* in their army, when to fight against *Israel*, lest in the battel he should be an adversary to them; And darest thou go to duty, or engage in any action, where Satan will appear against thee, and not endeavour to make sure of thy pride, unbelief, &c. that they joyn not with thine enemy? *Use.*

Secondly, are Satan and thy own flesh against thee, not single corruption, but edged with his policy, and backed by his power? see then what need thou hast of more help than thy owne grace; take heed of grapling with him in the strength of thy naked grace; here thou hast two to one against thee, Satan was too hard for *Adam*, though he went so well appointed into the field, because left to himself, much more easily will he foile thee; cling therefore about thy God for strength, get him with thee, and then though a worm, thou shalt be able to deal with this Serpent. 2.

SECT. II.

Secondly, flesh and blood is interpreted as a *periphrasis* of man. We wrestle not with flesh and blood, that is, not with man, who is here described by that part which chiefly distinguisheth him from the Angelical nature: *Touch me*, saith Christ, *and* 2.

handle me, a Spirit hath not flesh. Now according to this Interpretation observe;

1. First, how meanly the Spirit of God speaks of man.

Secondly, where he layes the streſſe of the Saints battel, not in resisting flesh and blood, but Principalities and Powers; where the Apostle excludes not our combate with man, for the war is against the Serpent and his seed. As wide as the world is, it cannot peaceably hold the Saints and wicked together; but his intent is to shew, what a complicated enemy (mans wrath and Satans interwoven together) we have to deal with.

First, for the first, how meanly doth the Spirit of God speak of man, calling him flesh and blood? Man hath a Heaven-borne soul, which makes him a kin to Angels, yea, to the God of them who is the Father of Spirits; but this is passed by in silence, as if God would not own that which is tainted with sinne, and not the creature God at first made it, or because the soul, though of such noble extraction, yet being so immerst in sensuality, deserves no other name than flesh, which part of man levels him with the beast, and is here intended to expresse the weakness and frailty of mans nature. 'Tis the phrase which the Holy Ghost expresseth the weakness and impotency of a creature by, *Isa.* 31. 3. *They are men, and their horses are flesh*; that is, weak; as on the contrary, when he would set out the power and strength of a thing, he opposeth it to flesh, 2 *Cor.* 10. 3. *Our weapons are not carnal, but mighty*; and so in the text, not flesh and blood, but Powers. As if he should say, Had you no other to feare but a weak sorry man, it were not worth the providing armes or ammunition; but you have enemies that neither are flesh, nor are resisted with flesh; so that here we see what a weak creature man is, not only weaker than Angels, as they are Spirit, and he flesh, but in some sense beneath the beasts, as the flesh of man is frailer than the flesh of beasts, therefore the Spirit of God compares man to the *grasse*, which soon *withers*, Isa. 40. 6. and his *goodlinesse to the flower of the field.* Yea, he is called vanity, *Psal.* 62. 9. (*Men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye*, both alike vain; only the rich and the great man, his vanity is covered with honour, wealth, &c. which are here called a lye, because they are not what they seem, and so worse than plain vanity, which is known to be so, and deceives not.

First,

Firſt, Is man but fraile fleſh? let this humble thee, O man, in all thy excellency, fleſh is but one remove from filth and corruption: thy ſoul is the ſalt that keeps thee ſweet, or elſe thou wouldeſt ſtink above ground. Is it thy beauty thou prideſt in? fleſh is graſſe, but beauty is the vanity of this vanity. This goodlineſſe is like the flower, which laſts not ſo long as the graſſe, appears in its moneth, and is gone, yea, like the beauty of the flower, which fades while the flower ſtands. How ſoon will times plough make furrowes in thy face, yea, one fit of an Ague ſo change thy countenance, as ſhall make thy doting lovers afraid to look on thee? Is it ſtrength? alas, it is an arme of fleſh, which withers oft in the ſtretching forth; ere long thy blood which is now warme, will freeze in thy veines; thy Spring crown'd with *May*-buds, will tread on *Decembers* heel; thy marrow dry in thy bones, thy ſinews ſhrink, thy legs bow under the weight of thy body, thy eye-ſtrings crack, thy tongue not able to call for help; yea, thy heart with thy fleſh ſhall faile; and now thou, who art ſuch a giant, take a turne if thou canſt in thy chamber, yea, raiſe but thy head from thy pillow if thou art able, or call back thy breath, which is making haſte to be gone out of thy noſtrils, never to return more; and dareſt thou glory in that which ſo ſoon may be proſtrate? *Uſe* 1.

Is it wiſdome? the ſame grave that covers thy body, ſhall bury all that, (the wiſdome of thy fleſh I mean) all thy thoughts ſhall periſh, and goodly plots come to nothing. Indeed, if a Chriſtian, thy thoughts as ſuch ſhall aſcend with thee, not one holy breathing of thy ſoul loſt. Is it thy blood and birth? whoever thou art, thou art baſe borne till borne againe, the ſame blood runs in thy veines, with the beggar in the ſtreet, *Acts* 17. 26. All Nations there we finde made of the ſame blood, in two things all are alike, we come in and go out of the world alike; as one is not made of finer earth, ſo not reſolved into purer duſt.

Secondly, Is man fleſh? truſt not in man; *Curſed be he that makes fleſh his arme.* Not the mighty man; robes may hide and garniſh, they cannot change fleſh, *Pſal.* 146. *Put not your truſt in Princes*; alas, they cannot keep their crowns on their own heads, their heads on their own ſhoulders, and looke ſt thou for that which they cannot give themſelves? Nor in *Uſe* 2.

wise men, whose designs recoil oft upon themselves, that they cannot perform their enterprise.----*Amphora cœpit institui currente rota cur urceus exit.* Mans carnal wisdome intends one thing, but God turnes the wheel, and brings forth another. Trust not in holy men, they have flesh, and so their judgement not infallible; yea, their way sometimes doubtful. His mistake may lead thee aside, and though he returns, thou mayest go on and perish. Trust not in any man, in all men, no not in thy self, thou art flesh. *He is a fool* (saith the Wise man) *that trusts his heart.* Not in the best thou art or doest, the garment of thy righteousnesse is spotted with the flesh; all is counted by Saint *Paul*, *confidence in the flesh*, besides our rejoycing in Christ, *Phil.* 3. 3.

Use 3. Thirdly, fear not man, he is but flesh. This was *Davids* resolve, *Ps.* 56. 4. I *will not fear what flesh can do unto me*; thou need'st not, thou ought'st not to fear. Thou need'st not. What, not such a great man, not such a number of men, who have the keyes of all the prisons at their girdle, who can kill or save alive, no, not these, only look they be thy enemies for Righteousnesse sake. Take heed thou makest not the least childe thine enemy, by offering wrong to him, God will right the wicked even upon the Saint. If he offends, he shall finde no shelter under Gods wing for his sin. This made *Jerome* complain that the Christians sins made the armes of those barbarous Nations which invaded *Christendome* victorious: *Nostris peccatis fortes sunt barbari.* But if mans wrath findes thee in Gods way, and his fury take fire at thy holinesse, thou needest not fear, though thy life be the prey he hunts for. Flesh can only wound flesh, he may kill thee, but not hurt thee, why shouldest thou fear to be stript of that which thou hast resign'd already to Christ? 'tis the first lesson thou learnest, if a Christian, to deny thy self, take up thy crosse, and follow thy Master; so that the enemy comes too late; thou hast no life to lose, because thou hast given it already to Christ, nor can man take away that without Gods leave; all thou hast is ensured; and though God hath not promised thee immunity from suffering in this kinde, yet he hath undertaken to bear the losse, yea, to pay thee a hundred fold, and thou shalt not stay for it till another world. Again; thou ought'st not to fear flesh. Our Saviour, *Matth.* 16. thrice in the compass of

six

six verses, commands us not to fear man; if thy heart quailes at him, how wilt thou behave thy self in the List against Satan, whose little finger is heavier than mans loynes? The *Romanes* had *arma præluſoria*; weapons rebated or cudgels, which they were tried at before they came to the sharp. If thou canst not bear a bruise in thy flesh from mans cudgel and blunt weapon, what wilt thou do when thou shalt have Satans sword in thy side? God counts himself reproached when his children fear a sorry man: therefore we are bid, Sanctifie the Lord, and not to fear their fear. Now if thou wouldest not fear man who is but flesh; Labour,

First, to mortifie thy own flesh. Flesh only fears flesh: when the soul degenerates into carnal desires and delights, no wonder he falls into carnal fears. Have a care, Christian, thou bring'st not thy self into bondage: perhaps thy heart feeds on the applause of men, this will make thee afraid to be evil spoken of, as those who shuffled with Christ, *John* 12. 42. owning him in private when they durst not confesse him openly, for they loved the praise of men; *David* saith, *the mouth of the wicked is an open Sepulchre*; and in this grave hath many a Saints name been buried; but if this fleshly desire were mortified, thou would'st not passe to be judg'd by man, and so of all carnal affections. Some meat you observe is aguish; if thou setteſt thy heart on any thing that is carnal, wife, childe, estate, &c. these will incline thee to a base fear of man, who may be Gods messenger to afflict thee in these.

Secondly, set faith against flesh. Faith fixeth the heart, and a fixed heart is not readily afraid. Physitians tell us we are never so subject to receive infection as when the spirits are low, and therefore the antidotes they give are all cordials: When the spirit is low through unbelief, every threatning from man makes sad impression. Let thy faith take but a deep draught of the Promises, and thy courage will rise.

Fourthly, comfort thy self, Christian, with this, that as thou art flesh, so thy heavenly Father knows it, and considers thee for it. 4.

First, in point of affliction, *Psalm* 103. 14. *He knoweth our frame, he remembreth that we are but dust.* Not like some unskilful Emperick, who hath but one receipt for all, strong or

weak, young or old, but as a wise Physician considers his Patient, and then writes his bill: men and devils are but Gods Apothecaries, they make not our physick, but give what God prescribes. *Balaam* loved *Balaks* fee well enough, but could not go an hairs breadth beyond Gods Commission. Indeed God is not so choice with the wicked, *Isa.* 27. 7. *Hath he smitten him, as he smote those that smote him?* In a Saints cup the poison of the affliction is corrected, not so in the wickeds, and therefore what is medicine to the one, is ruine to the other.

Secondly, in duty; he knows you are but flesh, and therefore pities and accepts thy weak service, yea, he makes apologies for thee; *The Spirit is willing*, saith Christ, *but the flesh is weak.*

Thirdly, in temptations; he considers thou art flesh, and proportions the temptation to so weak a nature: 'tis call'd πειρασμὸς ἀνθρώπινος, such a temptation as is common to man, a moderate temptation (as in the margin) fitted for so fraile a creature. Whenever the Christian begins to faint under the weight of it, God makes as much haste to his succour, as a tender mother would to her swooning childe; therefore he is said to be nigh, to revive such, lest their spirits should faile.

SECT. 3.

The second thing follows: The conjuncture of the Saints enemies; We have not to do with naked man, but with man led on by Satan; not with flesh and blood, but Principalities and Powers acting in them. There are two sorts of men the Christian wrestles with, good men and bad, Satan strikes in with both.

First, the Christian wrestles with good men. Many a sharp conflict there hath been betwixt Saint and Saint, scuffling in the dark through misunderstanding of the truth, and each other: *Abraham* and *Lot* at strife. *Aaron* and *Miriam* justled with *Moses* for the wall, till God interposed and ended the quarrel by his immediate stroak on *Miriam*. The Apostles even in the presence of their Master, were at high words, contesting who should be greatest. Now in these Civil wars among Saints, Satan is the great

great kindle-coale, though little ſeen, becauſe, like *Ahab*, he fights in a diſguiſe, playing firſt on one ſide, and then on the other, aggravating every petty injury, and thereupon provoking to wrath and revenge: therefore the Apoſtle dehorting from anger, uſeth this argument, *Give no place to the devil*; as if he had ſaid, Fall not out among your ſelves, except you long for the devils company, who is the true ſouldier of fortune (as the common phraſe is) living by his ſword, and therefore haſtes thither where there is any hope of war. *Gregory* compares the Saints in their ſad differences to two cocks, which Satan the Maſter of the pit ſets on fighting, in hope, when kill'd to ſup with them at night. *Solomon* ſaith, *Prov.* 18. 6. *The mouth of the contentious man calls for ſtroakes.* Indeed we by our mutual ſtrifes give the devil a ſtaffe to beat us with; he cannot well work without fire, and therefore blows up theſe coales of contention, which he uſeth as his forge, to heat our ſpirits into wrath, and then we are malleable, eaſily hammer'd as he pleaſeth. Contention puts the ſoul into diſorder, and *inter arma ſilent leges*. The Law of grace acts not freely, when the Spirit is in a commotion; Meek *Moſes* provok't, ſpeaks unadviſedly. Me thinks this (if nothing elſe will) ſhould ſound a retreat to our unhappy differences, that this *Joab* hath a hand in them, he ſets this evil ſpirit betwixt brethren, and what folly is it for us to bite and devoure one another to make hell ſport? we are prone to miſtake our heate for zeal, whereas commonly in ſtrifes between Saints, it is a fire-ſhip ſent in by Satan to break their unity and order; wherein while they ſtand they are an Armado invincible, and Satan knows he hath no other way but this to ſhatter them: when the Chriſtians language which ſhould be one, begins to be confounded, they are then neare ſcattering; 'tis time for God to part his Children, when they cannot live in peace together.

2. Secondly, the Chriſtian wreſtles with wicked men. *Becauſe you are not of the world*, ſaith Chriſt, *the world hates you.* The Saints nature and life are Antipodes to the world, fire and water, heaven and hell, may ſooner be reconciled as they with it. The Heretick is his enemy for truths ſake, the prophane for holineſſe, to both the Chriſtian is an abomination, as the *Iſr elite* to the *Egyptian*; hence come wars, the fire of perſecution never goes

goes out in the hearts of the wicked, who say in their hearts as they once with their lips, *Christiani ad leones.* Now in all the Saints wars with the wicked, Satan is Commander in chief, 'tis their fathers work they do, his lusts they fulfill. The *Sabeans* plunder'd *Job*, but went on Satans errand. The Heretick broacheth corrupt doctrine, perverts the faith of many, but in that the Minister of Satan, 2 *Cor.* 11. 15. they have their call, their wiles and wages from him. Persecutors, their work ascribed to hell; is it a persecution of the tongue? 'tis hell sets it on fire; is it of the hand? still they are but the devils instruments, *Rev.* 2. 10. *The devil shall cast some of you into prison.*

Use 1. First, do you see any driving furiously against the truths or servants of Christ; O pity them as the most miserable wretches in the world, fear not their power, admire not their parts, they are men possessed of, and acted by the devil, they are his drudges and slaughter-slaves, as a Martyr call'd them. *Augustine* in *n* his Epistle to *Lycinius*, one of excellent parts, but wicked, who once was his Scholar, speaks thus pathetically to him: O how I could weep and mourn over thee, to see such a sparkling wit prostituted to the devils service! If thou hadst found a golden Chalice, thou wouldest have given it to the Church, but God hath given thee a golden head, parts and wit, and in this *propinas teipsum Diabolo*, thou drinkest thy self to the devil. When you see men of power or parts, using them against God that gave them, weep over them; better they had lived and died, the one slaves, the other fools, than do the devil such service with them.

Use 2. Secondly, O ye Saints, when reproached and persecuted, look further than man, spend not your wrath upon him; alas, they are but instruments in the devils hand; save your displeasure for Satan who is thy chief enemy, these may be won to Christs side, and so become thy friends at last. Now and then we see some running away from the devils colours, and washing the wounds with their tears, which they have made by their cruelty. 'Tis *n* a notable passage in *Anselme*, who compares the heretick and persecutor to the horse, and the devil to the Rider. Now, saith he, in battel, when the enemy comes riding up, the valiant souldier, *Non irascitur equo, sed equiti, & quantum potest agit ut equitem percutiat, equum possideat; sic contra malos homines agendum, non contra illos, sed illum qui illos instigat, ut dum Diabolus vincitur,*

vincitur, infœlices quos ille possidet liberentur: He is angry not with the horse but horseman, he labours to kill the man that he may possesse the horse for his use: Thus must we do with the wicked, we are not to bend our wrath against them, but Satan that rides them, and spurs them on, labouring by prayer for them as Christ did on the Crosse, to dismount the devil, that so these miserable souls hackneyed by him may be delivered from him. 'Tis more honour to take one soul alive out of the devils clutches, than to leave many slain upon the field. *Erasmus* saith of *Augustine*, that he begg'd the lives of those hereticks, at the hands of the Emperours Officers, who had been bloody persecutors of the Orthodox; *Cupiebat*, saith he, *amicus medicus supercesse, quos arte sua sanaret*: Like a kind Physitian he desired their life, that if possible he might work a cure on them, and make them sound in the faith.

CHAP. II.

Wherein is shewn, what a Principality Satan hath, how he came to be such a Prince, and how we may know whether we be under him as our Prince, or not.

VERSE 12.

But against Principalities and Powers, &c.

SECT. 1.

THe Apostle having shewn what the Saints enemies are not, *flesh and blood*, frail men, who cannot come but they are seen, who may be resisted with mans power, or escape by flight; now he describes them positively, *against Principalities, against Powers, &c.* Some think the Apostle by these divers names and titles, intends to set forth the distinct orders, where-

by the devils are one subordinate to another, so they make the Devil, *verse* 11. to be the Head or Monarch, and these, *verse* 12. so many inferiour orders, as among men there are Princes, Dukes, Earles, &c. under an Emperour. That there is an order among the devils cannot be denied. The Scripture speaks of a *Prince of devils*, *Matth.* 9. and of *the Devil and his Angels*, who with him fell from their first station, called his Angels as it's probably conceived, because one above the rest (as the head of the faction) drew with him multitudes of other into his party, who with him sinned and fell. But that there should be so many distinct orders among them, as there are several branches in this description, is not probable; too weak a notion to be the foundation of a Pulpit-discourse, therefore we shall take them as meant of the devil collectively. We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but devils, who are Principalities, Powers, &c. and not distributively, to make Principalities one rank, Powers another; for some of these branches cannot be meant of distinct orders, but promiscuously of all as spiritual wickednesses; it being not proper to one to be spirits or wicked, but common to all.

First, then the devil or whole pack of them are here described by their Government in this world, *Principalities*.

Secondly, by their strength and puissance, called *Powers*.

Tirdly, by their nature in its substance and degeneracy, *Spiritual wickednesse*.

Fourthly, in their Kingdome or proper Territories, *Rulers of the darknesse of this world*.

Fifthly, by the ground of the war, *In heavenly places, or about heavenly things*.

1. First, of the first, *Principalities*; ἀρχὰς, the abstract for the concrete, that is, such as have a Principality; So, *Titus* 3. 1. we are bid to be *subject to Principalities and Powers*, that is, Princes and Rulers, so the vulgar reades it. We wrestle against Princes; which some will have to expresse the eminency of their nature above mans, that as the state and spirit of Princes is more raised than others, great men have great spirits, as *Zeba* and *Zalmunna* to *Gideon*, asking who they were they slew at *Tabor*; *As thou art*, (say they) *so were they, each one resembled the children of a King*, that is, for Majesty and Presence beseeming a Princely race;

race; so they think, the eminent nature of Angels here to be intended, who are as far above the highest Prince, as he above the basest peasant; but because they are described by their nature in the fourth branch, I shall subscribe to their judgement, who take this for their Principality of Government, which the devil exerciseth in this lower world; and the Note shall be,

That Satan is a great Prince, Christ himselfe stiles him *the Prince of the world*, John 14. Princes have their thrones where they sit in state; Satan hath his, *Rev.* 2. 13. *Thou dwellest where Satan hath his throne*; and that such a one as no earthly Prince may compare; few Kings are enthroned in the hearts of their subjects, they rule their bodyes, and command their purses, but how oft in a day are they pull'd out of their thrones by the wishes of their discontented subjects: But Satan hath the heart of all his subjects. Princes have their homage and peculiar honour done to them; Satan is served upon the knee of his subjects, the wicked are said to *worship the devil*, Rev. 13. 4. No Prince expects such worship as he, no lesse than religious worship will serve him, 2 *Chron.* 11. 15. *Jeroboam* there is said to ordain Priests for devils, and therefore he is called not only the Prince, but the god of this world, because he hath the worship of a god given him. Princes such as are absolute have a Legislative Power, nay, their own will is their law, as at this day in *Turkey*, where their Laws are writ in no other Tables, than in the proud *Sultans* breast; thus Satan gives law to the poor sinner, who is bound and must obey, though the Law be writ with his own blood, and the creature hath nothing but damnation for fulfilling the devils lust; 'tis call'd *a Law of sin*, *Rom.* 8. 2. because it comes with authority; Princes have their Ministers of state, whom they employ for the safety and enlargement of their Territories: So Satan his, 2 *Cor.* 11. 15. who propagates his cursed designes, therefore we reade of *doctrine of devils*. Princes have their *Arcana Imperii*, which none knows but a few Favourites in whom they confide: thus the devil hath his mysteries of iniquity, and *depths* of Satan we read of, which all his subjects know not of, *Rev.* 2. 24. these are imparted to a few Favourites, such as *Elymas*, whom *Paul* calls *full of all subtilty, and childe of the devil*; such, whose consciences are so debauched, that they scruple not the most horrid sins, these are his white boyes. I have read of

Doct.

a people in *America*, that love meat beſt when 'tis rotten and ſtinks. The devil is of their diet, the more corrupt and rotten the creature is in ſin, the better he pleaſeth his tooth; ſome are more the children of the devil than others. Chriſt had his beloved Diſciple; and Satan thoſe that lie in his very boſome, and know what is in his heart. In a word, Princes have their *Vectigalia*, their tribute and cuſtome; ſo Satan his. Indeed he doth not ſo much ſhare with the ſinner in all, but is owner of all he hath, ſo that the devil is the Merchant, and the ſinner but the Broker to trade for him, who at laſt puts all his gains into the devils purſe: time, ſtrength, parts, yea, conſcience and all ſpent to keep him in his throne.

SECT. 2.

Queſt. *But how comes Satan to this Principality?*

Anſw. Not lawfully, though he can ſhew a fair claim. As,

Firſt, he obtained it by Conqueſt, as he won his Crown; ſo he wears it by power and policy. But conqueſt is a crack't title. A thief is not the honeſter, becauſe able to force the traveller to deliver his purſe; and a thief on the Throne is no better than a private one on the road, or Pyrate in a Pinnace, as he boldly told *Alexander*. Neither doth that prove good with proceſſe of time, which was evil at firſt: Satan indeed hath kept poſſeſſion long, but a thief will be ſo as long as he keeps his ſtollen goods; He ſtole the heart of *Adam* from God at firſt, and doth no better to this day. Chriſts Conqueſt is good, becauſe the ground of the war righteous, to recover what was his own, which Satan cannot ſay of the meaneſt creature, *'Tis my own.*

2. Secondly, Satan may lay claim to his Principality by Election; 'Tis true he came in by a wile, but now he is a Prince Elect, by the unanimous voice of corrupt nature; *Ye are of your father the devil*, ſaith Chriſt, *and his luſts ye will do.* But this alſo hath a flaw in it, for man by law of Creation is Gods ſubject, and cannot give away Gods right; by ſin he loſeth his right in God, as a Protectour; but God loſeth not his right as a Soveraign. Sin diſabled man to keep Gods Law, but it doth not enfranchiſe or diſ-oblige him that he need not keep it.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Satan may claim a deed of gift from God himself, as he was bold to do to Christ himself upon this ground, perswading him to worship him as the Prince of the world, *Luke* 4. 5, 6. *He shewed unto him all the Kingdomes of the world, saying, All this will I give thee, for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it:* Where there was a truth, though he spake more than the truth, (as he cannot speak truth, but to gain credit to some lie at the end of it.) God indeed hath delivered in a sense this world to him, but not in his sense to do what he will with it, nor by any approbatory act given him a Patrent to vouch him his Vice-Roy, not Satan by the *grace* of God, but by the *permission* of God Prince of the world. 3.

But why doth God permit this Apostate-creature to exercise such a Principality over the world? Quest.

First, as a righteous act of vengeance on man; for revolting from the sweet Government of his rightful Lord and Maker; 'Tis the way that God punisheth rebellion; *Because ye would not serve me with gladnesse in the abundance of all things, therefore ye shall serve your enemies in hunger, &c.* Satan is a King given in Gods wrath. (*Hams* curse is mans punishment, *a Servant of servants.* The devil is Gods slave, man the devils. Sin hath set the devil on the creatures back, and now he hurries him without mercy, (as he did the swine) till he be choak't with flames, if mercy interpose not. Answ.

Secondly, God permits this his Principality, in order to the glorifying of his Name in the recovery of his Elect from the power of this great Potentate. What a glorious Name will God have when he hath finished this war, wherein at first he found all possessed by this enemy, and not a man of all the sons of *Adam* to offer himself as a Voluntier in this service, till made willing by the day of his Power? this, this will gain God a name above every name, not only of creatures, but of those by which himself was known to his creature. The workmanship of heaven and earth gave him the Name of Creatour, Providence of Preserver, but this of Saviour, wherein he doth both the former, preserve his creature which else had been lost, and create a new creature, I mean the Babe of Grace, which, through God, shall be able to beat the devil out of the field, who was able to drive *Adam* (though created in his full stature) out of Paradise, and

may not all the other works of God empty themselves as rivers into this sea, losing their names, or rather swelling into one of Redemption? Had not *Satan* taken Gods Elect prisoners, they would not have gone to heaven with such acclamations of triumph. There are three expressions of a great joy in Scripture; the joy of a woman after her travel; the joy of harvest, and the joy of him that divideth the spoil: the exultation of all these is wrought upon a sad ground, many a paine and teare it costs the travelling woman, many a feare the husbandman, perils and wounds the souldier, before they come at their joy, but at last are paid for all, the remembrance of their past sorrows feeding their present joyes. Had Christ come and entered into affinity with our nature, and return'd peaceably to heaven with his Spouse, finding no resistance; though this would have been admirable love, and that would have afforded the joy of marriage, yet this way of carrying his *Saints* to heaven will greaten the joy, as it addes to the nuptial song, the triumph of a Conquerour, who hath rescued his Bride out of the hands of Satan, as he was leading her to the chambers of hell.

SECT. 3.

Use 1. Is *Satan* such a great Prince? try whose subject thou art. His Empire is large, only a few privileg'd, who are translated into the Kingdome of *Gods* dear Son; even in Christs own territories, (visible Church I mean) where his name is profest, and the *Scepter* of his Gospel held forth, there Satan hath his subjects. As Christ had his Saints in *Nero's* Court; so the devil his servants in the outward Court of his visible Church. Thou must therefore have something more to exempt thee from his Government, than living within the pale, and giving an outward conformity to the Ordinances of Christ, Satan will yield to this, and be no loser: As a King lets his Merchants trade to, yea, live in a forreign Kingdome, and while they are there learn the language, and observe the customes of the place; this breaks not their allegiance, nor all that thy loyalty to Satan. When a Statute was made in Queen *Elizabeths* reign, that all should come to Church, the Papists sent to *Rome* to know the Popes pleasure, he return'd

return'd them this answer, (as 'tis said) *Bid the Catholicks in* England *give me their heart, and let the Queen take the rest.* His subject thou art whom thou crowneſt in thy heart, and not whom thou flattereſt with thy lips.

But to bring the tryal to an iſſue, know thou belongeſt to one of theſe, and but to one, Chriſt and Satan divide the whole world; Chriſt will bear no equal, and Satan no Superiour, and therefore hold in with both thou canſt not. Now if thou ſayeſt Chriſt be thy Prince, anſwer to theſe Interrogatories.

Firſt, how came he into the Throne? Satan had once the quiet poſſeſſion of thy heart: thou waſt by birth as the reſt of thy neighbours, Satans vaſſal, yea, haſt oft vouch't him in the courſe of thy life to be thy Liege Lord, how then comes this great change? Satan ſurely would not of his own accord reſigne his Crown and Scepter to Chriſt; and for thy ſelf thou wert neither willing to renounce, nor able to reſiſt his power: this then muſt only be the fruits of Chriſts victorious arms, whom *God hath exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour*, *Acts* 5. 31. Speak therefore, hath Chriſt come to thee, as once *Abraham* to *Lot*, when priſoner to *Kederlaomer*, reſcuing thee out of Satans hands, as he was leading thee in chains of luſt to hell? Didſt thou ever hear a voice from heaven in the Miniſtery of the Word calling out to thee, as once to *Saul*, ſo as to lay thee at Gods foot, and make thee face about for heaven, to ſtrike thee blinde in thine own apprehenſion, who before hadſt a good opinion of thy ſtate, to tame and meeken thee; ſo as now thou art willing to be led by the hand of a childe after Chriſt? Did ever Chriſt come to thee, as the Angel to *Peter* in priſon, rowſing thee up, and not only cauſing the chains of darkneſſe and ſtupidity to fall off thy minde and conſcience, but make thee obedient alſo, that the iron gate of thy will hath opened to Chriſt before he left thee? then thou haſt ſomething to ſay for thy freedome: But if in all this I be a Barbarian, and the language I ſpeak be ſtrange, thou knoweſt no ſuch work to have paſſed upon thy ſpirit, then thou art yet in thy old priſon; can there be a change of Government in a Nation by a Conquerour that invades it, and the ſubjects not hear of this? one King unthroned, and another crowned in thy ſoul, and thou hear no ſcuffle all this while? The regenerating Spirit is compared to the *winde*, *John* 3. 8.

3. 8. His first attempts on the soul may be so secret, that the creature knows not whence they come, or whither they tend; but before he hath done, the *sound* will be heard throughout the soul, so as it cannot but see a great change in it selfe, and say, I that was blinde, now I see; I that was as hard as ice, now relenting for sin; now my heart gives, I can melt and mourne for it. I that was well enough without a Christ, yea, did wonder what others saw in him, to make such a do for him, now have changed my note with the *Daughters of Jerusalem*; and for what, is your Beloved (as I scornfully have ask't) I have learn't to ask where he is, that I might seek him with you. O soul! canst thou say 'tis thus with thee, thou mayest know who has been here; no lesse than Christ, who by his victorious Spirit hath translated thee from Satans power into his own sweet Kingdom.

Secondly, whose law doest thou freely subject thy selfe unto? the lawes of these Princes are as contrary as their natures; the one a law of sinne, *Rom.* 8. 2. the other a law of holinesse, *Rom.* 7. 12. and therefore if sinne hath not so far bereav'd thee of thy wits, as not to know sinne from holinesse, thou mayest, (except resolve to cheat thy own soul) soon be resolved; confesse therefore and give glory to God, to which of these laws doth thy soul set its seal? When Satan sends out his Proclamation, and bids sinner go, set thy foot upon such a command of God, observe what is thy behaviour, doest thou yield thy selfe, as *Paul* phraseth it, *Rom.* 6. 16. παριστάνετε, a metaphor from Princes servants or others, who are said παιστάνειν ἑαυτὸς, to present themselves before their Lord, as ready and at hand to do their pleasure, by which the *Apostle* elegantly describes the forwardnesse of the sinners heart to come to Satans foot, when knock or call; Now doth thy soul go out thus to meet thy lust, (as *Aaron* his brother) glad to see its face in an occasion? thou art not brought over to sin with much ado, but thou likest the command; *Transgresse at Gilgal*, (saith God) *this liketh you well*, Hos. 4. 5. As a Courtier, who doth not only obey, but thank his Prince that he'll employ him. Need'st thou be long in resolving whose thou art? did ever any question, whether those were *Jeroboams* subjects, who willingly followed his command? *Hos.* 5. 11. Alas, for thee, thou art under the power of Satan, tyed by a chaine stronger than brasse or iron; thou lovest thy lust. A Saint may be

be for a time under a force, *sold under sin*, as the Apostle bemoans, and therefore glad when deliverance comes, but thou sellest thy self to work iniquity. If Christ should come to take thee from thy lusts, thou wouldest whine after them, as *Micah* after his gods.

Thirdly, to whom goest thou for protection? as it belongs to the Prince to protect his subjects, so Princes expect their subjects should trust them with their safety; the very bramble bids, *Judg.* 9. 15. *If in truth ye anoint me King, then put your trust under my shadow.* Now who hath thy confidence? Darest thou trust God with thy soul, and the affaires of it in well-doing? Good subjects follow their calling, commit State-matters to the wisdome of their Prince and his Councel; when wrong'd, they appeal to their Prince in his Laws for right; and when they do offend their Prince, they submit to the penalty of the Law? and bear his displeasure patiently, till humbling themselves they recover his favour, and do not in a discontent fall to open rebellion. Thus a gracious soul followes his Christian calling, committing himself to God as a faithful Creator, to be ordered by his wise Providence. If he meets with violence from any, he scorns to beg aid of the devil to help him, or be his own Judge to right himself: No, he acquiesceth in the counsel and comfort the Word of God gives him. If himself offends, and so comes under the lash of Gods correcting hand, he doth not then take up rebellious arms against God, and refuse to receive correction, but saith, *Why should a living man complain? a man for the punishment of his sin:* whereas a naughty heart dares not venture his estate, life, credit, or any thing he hath with God in well-doing, he thinks he shall be undone presently, if he sits still under the shadow of Gods promise for protection; and therefore he runs from God as from under an old house that would fall on his head, and layes the weight of his confidence in wicked policy, making lyes his refuge; like *Israel*, *he trusts in perverseness*, when God tells him, *In returning and rest he shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be his strength:* he hath not faith to take Gods Word for his security in wayes of obedience. And when God comes to afflict him for any disloyal carriage, instead of accepting the punishment for his sin, and so to own him for his Soveraign Lord; that may righteously punish the

faults of his disobedient subjects, his heart is fill'd with rage against God, and in stead of waiting quietly and humbly, (like a good subject) till God upon his repentance receives him into his favour, his wretched heart (presenting God as an enemy to him) will not suffer any such gracious and amiable thought of God to dwell in his bosome, but bids him look for no good at his hand. *This evil is of the Lord, why should I wait on the Lord any longer?* whereas a gracious heart is most encouraged to wait from this very consideration that drives the other away; Because 'tis the Lord afflicts, *Mich. 7. 6.*

4. Fourthly, whom doest thou sympathize with? he is thy Prince, whose victoryes and losses thou layest to heart, whether in thy own bosome, or abroad in the world. What saith thy soul, when God hedgeth up thy way, and keeps thee from that sin which Satan hath been soliciting for? If on Christs side thou wilt rejoyce when thou art delivered out of a temptation, though it be by falling into an affliction; as *David* said of *Abigail*, so wilt thou here: Blessed be the Ordinance, blessed be the Providence which kept me from sinning against my God; but if otherwise thou wilt harbour a secret grudge against the Word which stood in thy way, and be discontented, thy designe took not. A naughty heart (like *Amnon*) pines while his lust hath vent, Again, what musidk do the atchievements of Christ in the world make in thy eare? when thou heareſt the Gospel thrives, the blinde see, the lame walk, the poor gospellized, doth thy spirit rejoyce in that houre? If a Saint, thou wilt, as God is thy Father, rejoyce, thou hast more brethren borne; as he is thy Prince, that the multitude of his subjects increase; so when thou seest the plots of Christs enemies discovered, powers defeated, canst thou go forth with the Saints to meet King Jesus, and ring him out of the field with praises? or do thy bells ring backward; and such newes make thee haste like *Haman*, mourning to thine house, there to empty thy spirit swolne with rancour against his Saints and truth? or if thy policy can matter thy passion, so far as to make faire weather in thy countenance, and suffer thee to joyne with the people of God in their acclamations of joy, yet then art thou a close mourner within, and likest the work no better than *Haman* his office in holding *Mordecai's* stirrup, who had rather have held the ladder; this speaks thee a certain enemy

enemy to Chriſt, how handſomely ſoever thou mayeſt carry it before men.

Secondly, bleſſe God, O ye Saints, who upon the former trial can ſay, you are tranſlated into the Kingdome of Chriſt, and ſo delivered from the tyranny of this uſurper: There are few but have ſome one gaudy day in a year which they ſolemnize; ſome keep their birth-day, others their marriage; ſome their manumiſſion from a cruel ſervice, others their deliverance from ſome imminent danger; here is a mercy where all theſe meet. You may call it, as *Adam* did his wife, *Chavah*, the mother of all the living; every mercy riſeth up and calls this bleſſed; this is thy birth-day, thou wert before, but beganſt to live, when Chriſt began to live in thee, the father of the Prodigal dated his ſonnes life from his returne; *This my ſonne was dead, and is alive.* It is thy marriage-day; *I have marryed you to one husband, even Chriſt Jeſus*, ſaid *Paul* to the *Corinthians*. Perhaps thou haſt enjoyed this thy husbands ſweet company many a day, and had a numerous off-ſpring of joyes and comforts by thy fellowſhip with him, the thought of which cannot but endeare him to thee, and make the day of they eſpouſals delightful to thy memory; 'Tis thy manumiſſion, then were the Indentures cancell'd, wherein thou wert bound to ſinne and Satan; when the Sonne made thee free, thou becameſt free indeed: Thou canſt not ſay thou waſt borne free, for thy father was a ſlave, nor that thou boughteſt thy freedome with a ſumme; *By grace ye are ſaved.* Heaven is ſetled on thee in the promiſe, and thou not at charge ſo much as for the writings drawing. All is done at Chriſt his coſt, with whom God indented, and to whom he gave the promiſe of eternal life before the world began, as a free eſtate to ſettle upon every believing ſoul in the day they ſhould come to Chriſt, and receive him for their Prince and Saviour: ſo that from the houre thou didſt come under Chriſts ſhadow, all the ſweet fruit that grows on this tree of life is thine; with Chriſt all that both worlds have falls to thee: *All is yours*, becauſe *you are Chriſt's.* O Chriſtian, look upon thy ſelf new, and bleſſe thy God to ſee what a change there is made in thy ſtate, ſince that black and diſmal time, when thou wert ſlave to the Prince of darkneſſe; how couldeſt thou like thy old Scullions work again? or think of returning to thy houſe of bondage? now thou knoweſt the pri- *Uſe 2.*

viledges of Chriſts Kingdomes. Great Princes, who from baſeneſſe and beggery have aſcended to Kingdomes and Empires, (to adde to the joy of their preſent honour) have delighted to ſpeak often of their baſe birth; to go and ſee the mean cottages where they were firſt entertained, and had their birth and breeding, and the like. And 'tis not unuſeful for the Chriſtian to look in at the grate, to ſee the ſmoaky hole where once he lay, to view the chains wherewith he was laden, and ſo to compare Chriſts Court, and the devils priſon; the felicity of the one, and the horror of the other together. But when we do our beſt to affect our hearts with this mercy by all the inhancing aggravations we can find out. Alas, how little a portion of it ſhall we know here? this is a *nimium excellens*, which cannot be fully ſeen, unleſſe it be by a glorified eye; how can it be fully known by us, where it cannot be fully enjoyed? thou art tranſlated into the Kingdome of Chriſt, but thou art a great way from his Court. That is kept in heaven, and that the Chriſtian knows, but as we far countryes which we never ſaw, only by map, or ſome raritys that are ſent us as a taſte of what growes there in abundance.

Uſe 3. Thirdly, this (Chriſtian) calls for thy loyalty and faithful ſervice to Chriſt, who hath ſaved thee from Satans bondage. Say, O ye Saints, to Chriſt, as they to *Gideon*, Come thou and rule over us, for thou haſt delivered us from the hand, not of *Midian*, but of Satan. Who ſo able to defend thee from his wrath, as he who broke his power? who like to rule thee ſo tenderly, as he that could not brook anothers tyranny over thee? In a word, who hath right to thee beſides him, who ventur'd his life to redeem thee? *that being delivered from all thine enemies, thou mayeſt ſerve him without fear in holineſſe all the dayes of thy life.* And were it not pity that Chriſt ſhould take all this pains to lift up thy head from Satans houſe of bondage, and give thee a place among thoſe in his own houſe, who are admitted to miniſter unto him, (which is the higheſt honour the nature of men or Angels is capable of,) and that thou ſhouldeſt after all this be found to have a hand in any treaſonable practice againſt thy dear Saviour? Surely Chriſt may think he hath deſerved better at your hands, if at none beſides. Where ſhall a Prince ſafely dwell, if not in the midſt of his own Courtiers; and thoſe ſuch who were all taken from chains and priſons to be thus preferr'd, the more to oblige them in his ſer-

service? Let devils and devillish men do their own work, but let not thy hand (O Christian) be upon thy dear Saviour. But this is too little to bid thee not play the traitor. If thou hast any loyal blood running in thy veines, thy own heart will smite thee when thou rendest the least skirt of his holy Law; thou canst as well carry burning coales in thy bosome, as hide any treason there against thy dear Sovereign. No, 'tis some noble enterprise I would have thee think upon, how thou mayest advance the Name of Christ higher in thy heart, and world too as much as in thee lies. O how kindly did God take it, that *David* (when peaceably set in his throne) was casting about, not how he might entertain himself with those pleasures, which usually corrupt and debauch the Court of Princes in times of peace, but how he might shew his zeal for God, in building a house for his worship, that had rear'd a throne for him, 2 *Sam.* 7. And is there nothing (Christian) thou canst think on, wherein thou mayest eminently be instrumental for God in thy generation? He is not a good subject that is all for what he can get of his Prince, but never thinks what service he may do for him. Nor he the true Christian, whose thoughts dwell more on his own happinesse than the honour of his God. If subjects might chuse what life stands best for their own enjoyment, all would desire to live at Court with their Prince: But because the Princes honour is more to be valued than this: therefore noble spirits (to do their Prince service) can deny themselves the delicacies of a Court, to jeapord thir lives in the field, and thank their Prince too for the honour of their employment. Blessed *Paul* upon these termes was willing to have his day of coronation in glory prorogued, and he to stay as companion with his brethren in tribulation here, for the furtherance of the Gospel. This indeed makes it *operæ pretium vivere*, worth the while to live, that we have by it a faire opportunity, (if hearts to husband it) in which we may give a proof of our real gratitude to our God, for his redeeming love in rescuing us out of the power of the Prince of darknesse, and translating us into the Kingdome of his dear Sonne. And therefore (Christian) lose no time, but what thou meanest to do for God, do it quickly: Art thou a Magistrate? now it will be soon seen on whose side thou art; if indeed thou hast renounced allegiance to Satan, and taken Christ for thy Prince, declare thy self an e-

nemy to all that bear the name of Satan, and march under his colours. Study well thy commiſſion, and when thou underſtandeſt the duty of thy place, fall to work zealouſly for God. Thou haſt thy Princes ſword put into thy hand, be ſure thou uſe it, and take heed how thou uſeſt it; that when call'd to deliver it up, and thy accounr alſo, it may not be found ruſty in the ſheath through ſloth and cowardiſe, beſmeared with the blood of violence, nor bent and gap't with partiality and injuſtice. Art thou a Miniſter of the Goſpel? thy employment is high, an Ambaſſadour, and that not from ſome petty Prince, but the great God to his rebellious ſubjects. A calling ſo honourable, that the *Son of God* diſdained not to come in extraordinary from heaven to perform it, call'd therefore *the meſſenger of the Covenant*; yea, he had to this day ſtay'd on earth in perſon about it, had he not been call'd to reſide as our *Ambaſſadour* and Advocate in heaven with the Father: and therefore in his bodily abſence he hath intruſted thee and a few more to carry on the Treaty with ſinners, which when on earth himſelf began. And what can you do more acceptable to him, than to be faithful in it, as a buſineſſe on which he hath ſet his heart ſo much? As ever you would ſee his ſweet face with joy, (you that are his Ambaſſadours) attend to your work, and labour to bring this Treaty of Peace to a bleſſed iſſue between God and thoſe you are ſent to. And then if ſinners will not come off, and ſeal the Articles of the Goſpel, you ſhall (as *Abraham* ſaid to his ſervant) be cleare of your oath. Though *Iſrael* be not gathered, yet you ſhall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord. And let not the private Chriſtian ſay he is a dry tree, and can do nothing for Chriſt his Prince, becauſe he may not bear the Magiſtrates fruit or Miniſters. Though thou haſt not a commiſſion to puniſh the ſinnes of others with the ſword of juſtice, yet thou mayeſt ſhew thy zeal, in mortifying thy own with the ſword of the Spirit, and mourne for theirs alſo: though thou mayeſt not condemn them on the bench, yet thou mayeſt, yea, oughteſt by the power of a holy life to convince and judge them. Such a Judge *Lot* was to the *Sodomites*. Though thou art not ſent to preach and baptize, yet thou may'ſt be wonderful helpful to them who are. The Chriſtians prayers whet Magiſtrates and Miniſters ſword alſo. O pray, Chriſtian, and pray again, that Chriſts Territories may be enlarged; never go to

heare

heare the Word; but pray, *Thy Kingdome come.* Loving Princes take great content in the acclamations and good wishes of their subjects as they passe by. *A vivat rex*, Long live the King, coming from a loyal breath, though poor, is more worth than a subsidy from those who deny their hearts while they part with their money. Thou serveſt a Prince (Christian) who knowes what all his subjects think of him, and he counts it his honour, not to have a multitude feinedly submit to him, but to have a people that love him and cordially like his government, who if they were to chuse their King, and make their own laws they should live under every day, would desire no other than himselfe, nor any other lawes than what they have already from his mouth; It was no doubt great content to *David*, that he had the hearts of his people so, as *whatever the King did, pleased them all.* And surely God took it as well, that what he did pleased *David*; for indeed *David* was as content under the rule and disposure of God as the people were under his; witnesse the calmnesse of his Spirit in the greatest affliction that ever befell him, 2 *Sam.* 15. 26. *Behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.* Loyal soul! he had rather live in exile with the good Will of God, than have his throne, if God will not say 'tis good for him. 2 Sam. 3. 26.

CHAP. IV.

Of the great power Satan hath not only over the elementary and sensitive part of the world, but intellectual also, the souls of men.

SECT. 1.

THis is the Second Branch of the Description, wherein Satan is set forth by his might and power. This gives weight to the former, were he a Prince, and not able to raise a force that might dread the Saints, the swelling name of Prince were con-

contemptible; but he hath power answerable to his dignity, which in five particulars will appear.

First, in his names; Secondly, his nature; Thirdly, his number; Fourthly, his order any unity; Lastly, the mighty works that are attributed to him.

1. First, for the first, he hath names of great power, called the *strong man*, *Luke* 11. 21. so strong that he keeps his house in peace in defiance of all the sons of *Adam*, none one earth being able to cope with this giant: Christ must come from Heaven to destroy him and his works, or the field is lost. He is call'd the *roaring lion*, which beast commands the whole forrest; If he roares, all tremble, yea, in such a manner, as *Pliny* relates, that he goes amongst them, and they stand exanimated while he chooseth his prey without resistance; such a lion is Satan, who leads sinners *captive at his will*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. *He takes them alive*, as the word is, as the Fowler the bird, which with a little scrap is enticed into the net; or as the Conquerour his cowardly enemy, who has no heart to fight, but yields without contest. Such cowards the Devil finds sinners, he no sooner appears in a motion, but they yield; They are but a very few noble spirits, and those are the children of the most high God, who dare valiantly oppose him, and in striving against sin resist to blood. He is call'd the *great red dragon*, who with his raile, wicked men his instruments, sweeps down the third part of the stars of Heaven. *The Prince of the power of the aire*, because as a Prince can muster his subjects, and draw them into the field for his service, so the devil can raise the *posse cœli aërii*. In a word, he is call'd *the God of this world*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. because sinners give him a God-like worship, feare him as the Saints do God himself.

2. Secondly, the devils nature shewes his power: 'Tis Angelical. *Bless the Lord, ye his Angels, that excel in strength*, Psal. 103. 20. Strength is put for Angels, *Psal.* 78. 25. *They did eat Angels food*, Heb. the food of the mighty. In two things the power of Angelical nature will appear; In its Superiority, and in its Spirituality.

First, its Superiority, Angels are the top of the Creation; man himself made a little lower than the Angels. Now in the works of Creation, the Superiour hath a power over the Inferiour;

feriour; the beasts over the grasse and herb, man over the beasts, and Angels over man.

Secondly, the Spiritualitie of their nature. The weaknesse of man is from his flesh: his soul made for great enterprizes, but weighed down with a lump of flesh, is forced to rowe with a strength suitable to its weaker Partner; but now the devils being Angels have no such incumbrance, no fumes from a fleshly part to cloud their understanding, which is clear and piercing; no clog at their heele to retard their motion, which for swiftnesse is set out by the winde and flame of fire. Yea, being spiritual they cannot be resisted with carnal force, fire and sword hurt not them. The Angel which appear'd to *Manoah*, went up in the fire that consumed the sacrifice, though such hath been the dotage, and is at this day of superstitious ones, that they think to charme the devil with their carnal exorcismes; hence the Romish Reliques, Crosse, holy water, yea, and among the Jewes themselves in corrupter times, who thought by their phylacteries and Circumcision, to scare away the devil, which made some of them expound that, *Cant.* 3. 8. of Circumcision, *Every man hath his sword on his thigh, because of feare in the night.* By sword on the thigh, they expound Circumcision, which they will vainly have given as a charme against evil spirits that affright them in the night. But alas, the devil cares for none of these, no, not for an Ordinance of God, when by fleshly confidence we make it a spell: he hath been often bound with these fetters and chaines, (as is said of him in the Gospel) and the chaines have been plucked asunder by him, neither could any man thus tame him. He esteems, as *Job* saith of the *Leviathan, iron as straw, and brasse as rotten wood.* It must be a stronger than the strong man must binde him, and none stronger but God the Father of spirits. The devil lost indeed by his fall much of his power, in relation to that holy and happy estate in which he was created, but not his natural abilities, he is an Angel still, and hath an Angels power.

Thirdly, the number of devils addes to their power. What lighter than the sand? yet number makes it weighty? what 3.
creature lesse than lice? yet what plague greater to the Egyptians? how formidable then must devils be, who are both for nature so mighty, and for number such a multitude? there are

devils enough to beleaguer the whole earth; not a place under heaven where Satan hath not his troops; not a person without some of these cursed spirits haunting and watching him where-ever he goes; yea, for some special service he can send a legion to keep garrison in one single person; as, *Mark.* 5. and if so many can be spared to attend one, to what a number would the muster-rolle of Satans whole army amount if known? And now tell me, if we are not like to finde our march difficult to heaven, (if ever we mean to go thither) that are to passe through the very quarters of this multitude, who are scattered over the face of all the earth. When armies are disbanded and the roads full of debauch't souldiers, wandering up and down, it's dangerous travelling: we heare then of murders and robberies from all quarters: These powers of hell are that party of Angels, who for their mutiny and disobedience were cashier'd heaven, and thrust out of that glorious host, and ever since they have straggled here below, endeavouring to do mischief to the children of men, especially travelling in heavens road.

4. Fourthly, their unity and order makes their number formidable. We cannot say there is love among them, that heavenly fire cannot live in a devils bosome, yet there is unity and order as to this, they are all agreed in their designe against God and man: so their unity and consent is knit together by the ligaments, not of love, but of hatred and policy; Hatred against God and his children which they are filled with; and policy, which tells them, that if they agree not in their designe, their Kingdome cannot stand. And how true they are to this wicked brotherhood, our Saviour gives a faire testimony, when he saith, *Satan fights not against Satan.* Did you ever heare of any mutiny in the devils army? or that any of those Apostate Angels did freely yield up one soul to Christ? They are many, and yet but one spirit of wickednesse in them all. *My name,* said the devils, (not our name,) *is legion.* The devil is call'd the *Leviathan, Isa.* 27. 1. *The Lord with his strong sword shall punish Leviathan,* from their cleaving together of יחד compact or joyned together, used for the whale, *Job* 4. whose strength lyes in his scales, which are so knit, that he is, as it were, covered with armour. Thus these cursed spirits do accord in their machinations, and labour to bring their instruments into

into the ſame league with them, not contented with their bare obedience, but where they can obtain it do require an expreſſe oath of their ſervants, to be true to them, as in witches.

Fifthly, the mighty works that are attributed to theſe evil ſpirits in Scripture declare their power, and theſe either reſpect the elementary, ſenſible, or intellectual part of the world. The Elementary, what dreadful effects this Prince of the power of the aire is able to produce on that, ſee in the Word; he cannot indeed make the leaſt breath of aire, drop of water, or ſpark of fire, but he can, if let looſe, (as Reverend Maſter *Caryl* ſaith on *Job* 1.) go to Gods ſtore-houſe, and make uſe of theſe in ſuch a ſort, as no man can ſtand before him; he can hurle the ſea into ſuch a commotion, that the depths ſhall boile like a pot, and diſturb the aire into ſtormes and tempeſts, as if heaven and earth would meet. *Jobs* children were buried in the ruines of their houſe by a puffe of his mouth, yea, he can go to Gods magazine, (as the former Author ſaith) and let off the great ordinance of heaven, cauſing ſuch dreadful thunder and lightning, as ſhall not only affright, but do real execution, and that in a more dreadful way than in the ordinary courſe of nature. If mans Art can ſo ſublimate nature, as we ſee in the invention of powder, that hath ſuch a ſtrange force, much more able is he to draw forth its power. Again, over the ſenſitive world his power is great, not only the beaſts, as in the herd of ſwine, hurried by him into the deep; but over the bodyes of men alſo, as in *Job*, whoſe ſore boiles were not the breakings out of a diſtempered nature, but the print of Satans fangs on his fleſh, doing that ſuddenly, which in nature would have required more time to gather and ripen; and the demoniacks in the Goſpel grievouſly vexed and tormented by him. But this the devil counts ſmall game, his great ſpite is at the ſouls of men, which I call the Intellectual world, his cruelty to the body is for the ſouls ſake. As Chriſts pity to the bodyes of men, (when on earth) healing their diſeaſes, was in a ſubſerviency to the good of their ſouls, bribing them with thoſe mercyes ſuitable to their carnal deſires, that they might more willingly receive mercies for their ſouls, from that hand which was ſo kind to their bodies, as we give children ſomething that pleaſeth them, to perſwade them to do ſomething that pleaſeth them not, go to ſchool, learn their book: ſo the devil

who is cruel, as Christ is meek, and wisheth good neither to body nor soul, yet shewes his cruelty to the body, but on a design against the soul, knowing well that the soul is soon discomposed by the perturbation of the other, the soul cannot but lightly heare, (and so have its peace and rest broken by the groanes and complaints of the body) under whose very roof it dwells; and then it is not strange, if as for want of sleep the tongue talk idly, so the soul should break out into some sinful carriage, which is the bottom of the devils plot on a Saint. And as for other poor silly souls, he gaines little lesse than a God-like fear and dread of them by that power he puts forth (through divine permission) in smiting their goods, beasts and bodyes, as among the Indians at this day. Yea, there are many among our selves plainly shew what a throne Satan hath in their hearts upon this account, such who, as if there were not a God in *Israel*, go for help and cure to his Doctours, wizzards I mean. And truely had Satan no other way to work his will on the souls of men, but by this vantage he takes from the body, yet considering the degeneracy of mans state, how low his soul is sunk beneath its primitive extraction, how the body which was a lightsome house is now become a prison to it, that which was its servant is now become its Master; it is no wonder he is able to do so much. But besides this, he hath as a spirit a neerer way of accesse to the soul, and as a superiour spirit, yet moreover man a lower creature. And above all, having got within the soul by mans fall, he hath now far more power than before; so that where he meets not resistance from God he carries all before him: As in the wicked, whom he hath so at his devotion, that he is (in a sense) said to do that in them, which God doth in the Saints. God works effectually in them, *Gal.* 2. 8. 1 *Thes.* 2. 13. Satan worketh effectually in the children of disobedience, *Eph.* 2. 2. ἐνεργοῦντος, the same word with the former places, he is in a manner efficacious with them, as the holy Spirit with the other. His delusions strong, 2 *Thes.* 2. 11. They return not *re infectâ*. The Spirit *enlightens*, he *blindes* the mindes of those that believe not; 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. The Spirit *fills* the Saints, *Ephes.* 5. 18. *Why hath Satan filled thy heart*, saith *Peter* to *Ananias*, *Acts* 5. 3. *The Spirit fills with knowledge, and the fruits of righteousnesse*; Satan fills with envy and all unrighteousnesse. The holy Spirit

fills

fills with comfort; Satan the wicked with terrours: As in *Saul* vexed by an evil spirit; and *Judas*, into whom 'tis said he entered, and when he had satisfied his lust upon him, (as *Amnon* on *Tamar*) shuts the door of mercy upon him, and makes him that was even now Traitour to his Master, Hangman to himself. And though Saints be not the proper subjects of his power, yet they are the chief objects of his wrath, his foot stands on the wickeds back, but he wrestles with these, and when God steps aside, he is far above their match: He hath sent the strongest among them home, trembling and crying to their God, with the blood running about their consciences. He is mighty, both as a tempter to and for sinne, knowing the estate of the Christians affairs so wel, and able to throw his fire-bals so far into the inward senses, (whether they be of lust or horrour) and to blow up these with such unwearied solicitations, that if they at first meet not with some suitable dispositions in the Christian, at which (as from loose cornes of powder) they may take fire, (which is most ordinary) yet in time he may bring over the creature by the length of the siege, and continued volleys of such motions, to listen to a parley with them, if not a yielding to them. Thus many times he even wearies out the soul with importunity.

SECT. 2.

Use 1. First; let this (O man) make the plumes of thy pride fall, whoever thou art that glorieſt in thy power; hadst thou more than thou or any of the sons of *Adam* ever had, yet what were all that to the power of these Angels? Is it the strength of thy body thou glorieſt in? Alas, what is the strength of frail flesh, to the force of their spiritual nature? thou art no more to these than a childe to a giant, a worme to a man: who could tear up the mountaines, and hurle the world into a confusion, if God would but suffer them. *Is* it the strength of thy parts above others? doeſt thou not see what fooles he makes of the wiſeſt among men? winding them about as a Sophister would do an Idiot, make them believe light is dark, bitter is sweet, and sweet bitter; were not the strength of his parts admirable, could he make a rational creature as man is, so absurdly throw away his

scarlet, and embrace dung: I mean, part with God and the glorious happinesse he hath in him, in hope to mend himself, by embracing sin? yet this he did when man had his best wits about him in innocency. Is it the power of place and dignity got by warlike atchievement? Grant thou wert able to subdue Nations, and give laws to the whole world, yet even then without grace from above thou wouldest be his slave. And he himselfe for all this his power is a cursed spirit, the most miserable of all Gods creatures, and the more because he hath so much power to do mischief; had the devil lost all his Angelical abilities, when he fell, he had gained by his losse. Therefore tremble (O man) at any power thou hast, except thou usest it for God. Art strong in body? who hath thy strength? God, or thy lusts? some are strong to drink, strong to sin, *Thy hands shall therefore be stronger*, Isa. 28. 22. Hast thou power by thy place to do God and his Church service, but no heart to lay it out for them, but rather against them? thou and the devil shall be tried at the same bar, it seems thou meanest to go to hell for something, thou wilt carry thy full lading thither. No greater plague can befall a man than power without grace. Such great ones in the world, while here, make a brave shew, like chief Commanders and field-Officers at the head of their Regiments, the common souldiers are poor creatures to them; but when the Army is beaten, and all taken prisoners, then they fling off their scarfe and feather, and would be glad to passe for the meanest in the army. Happy would devils be, Princes and great ones in the world be, if then they could appear in the habit of some poor sneaks to receive their sentence as such, but then their titles, and dignity, and riches shall be read, not for their honour, but further shame and damnation.

Use 2. Secondly, it shewes the folly of those that think it is such an easie matter to get heaven. If the devil be so mighty, and heavens way so full of them, then sure it will cost hot water before we display our banners upon the walls of that new *Jerusalem*. Yet it is plain many think otherwise by the provision they make for their march. If you should see a man walking forth without a cloak, or with a very thin one, you will say, Surely he fears no foule weather, or one riding a long journey alone and without armes, you will conclude he expects no thieves on the road.

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All (if you ask them) will tell you they are on their way to heaven, but how few care for the company of the Saints, as if they needed not their fellowship in their journey? Most go naked, without so much as any thing like armour, have not enough to gaine the name of Professours at large; others, it may be, will shew you some vaine slighty hopes on the mercy of God, without any Scripture-bottom for the same, and with these content themselves, which will like a rusty unsound pistol flie in their own face, when they come to use it, and is it any wrong to say these make nothing of getting heaven? Surely these men, (many of whom thrive so well in the world) never got their estates with so little care as they think to get heaven. Ask them why they follow their trade so close, they will tell you estates are not got by sleeping, families are not provided for with the hands in the pocket, they meet with many rooks and cheaters in their dealing, who should they not look to themselves would soon undo them: and are there none that thou needest feare will put a cheat on thy soul, and bereave thee of thy crown of glory if they can? thou art blinder than the Prophts servant, if thou seest not more devils encompassing thee than he saw men about *Samaria*. Thy worldly trade they will not hinder, nay, may be help thee to sinful tricks in that to hinder thee in this: but if once thou resolvest to seek out for Christ and his grace, they will oppose thee to thy face; they are under an oath, as *Pauls* enemies were, to take away the life of thy soul if they can; desperate creatures themselves, who know their doom, is irrecoverable, and sell their own lives they will as dear as they can. Now what folly is it to betray thy soul into their hands, when Christ stands by to be thy convoy? out of him thou art a lost creature, thou canst not defend thy self alone against Satan, nor with Satan against God. Close with Christ, and thou art delivered from one of thy enemyes, and him the most formidable, God I mean: yea, he is become thy friend, who will stick close to thee in thy conflict with the other.

Thirdly, to the Saints; be not ye dismayed at this report which the Scripture makes of Satans power. Let them feare him who feare not God. What are these mountaines of power and pride before thee, O Christian, who servest a God that can make a worme thresh a mountaine? the greatest hurt he can do thee, is *Use 3.*

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by nourishing this false feare of him in thy bosome: It is observed (*Bernard* saith) of some beasts in the forrest, *Plerunque superant leonem ferientem, quæ non sustinent rugientem*: Though they are too hard for the Lion in fight, yet tremble when he roares. Thus the Christian, when he comes to the pinch indeed, is able through Christ to trample Satan under his feet, yet before the conflict stands trembling at the thought of him. Labour therefore to get a right understanding of Satans power, and then this Lion will not appear so fierce, as you paint him in your melancholy fancy. Three considerations will relive you, when at any time you are beset with the feares of his power.

1. First, it is a derived power; he hath it not in himselfe, but by pattent from another, and that no other but God: *All powers are of him*, whether on earth or in hell. This truth subscribed in faith would first secure thee (Christian) that Satans power shall never hurt thee. Would thy Father give him a sword to miscief thee his childe? *I have created the Smith* (saith God) *that bloweth the coales, I have created the waster to destroy*, and therefore assures them, *that no weapon formed against them shall prosper*, Isa. 54. 16, &c. If God provides his enemyes armes, they shall (I warrant you) be such as will do them little service. When *Pilate* thought to scare Christ, with what he could do towards the saving or taking away of his life, he replies, *that he could do nothing except it were given from above*, *John* 19. 10. as if he had said, Do your worst, I know who seal'd your commission,

2. Secondly, this considered, would meeken and quiet the soul, when troubled by Satan within, or his instruments without; 'Tis Satan buffets, man persecutes me, but God who gives them both power. *The Lord* (saith *David*) *bids him curse. The Lord* (saith *Job*) *hath given, and the Lord hath taken.* This kept the Kings peace in both their bosomes. O Christian, look not on the Jayler that whips thee, may be he is cruel, but read the warrant, who wrote that, and at the bottome thou shalt finde thy Fathers hand.

2. Secondly, Satans power is limited, and that two waies; he cannot do what he will, and he shall not do what he can.

1. First, he cannot do what he will. His desires are boundlesse, they walk not only to and fro here below, but in heaven it self, where he

he is pulling down his once fellow-Angels, knocking down the carved-work of that glorious Temple, as with axes and hammers, yea, unthroning God, and setting himselfe in his place, this foole saith in his heart, There is no God; but he cannot do this, nor many other things which his canker'd malice stirres him up to wish; he is but a creature, and so hath the length of his Tedder to which he is staked and cannot exceed; and if God be safe then thou also, for thy life is hid with Christ in God; *If I live* (saith Christ) *you shall live also.* You are engraven on the table of his heart, if he plucks one way, he must the other also. *Again,* as he cannot hurt the *being* of God, so he cannot pry into the *bosome* of God. He knows not *mans*, much lesse the thoughts of *God.* The Astrologers nor their Master could bring back *Nebuchadnezzars* dream. As men have their closets for their own privacy, where none can enter in but with their Key: so God keeps the heart as his withdrawing room, shut to all besides himselfe, and therefore when he takes upon him to foretel events; if God teach him not his lesson, nor second causes help him, he is beside his book; so to save his credit, delivers them dubiously, that his text may beare a glosse suitable to the effect whatever it is. And when he is bold to tell the state of a person, there is no weight to be laid on his judgement. *Job* was an hypocrite in his mouth, but God proved him a liar. Again, thirdly, he cannot hinder those purposes and counsels of God he knows. He knew Christ was to come in the flesh and did his worst, but could not hinder his landing, though there were many devices in his heart, yet the counsel of the Lord concerning him did stand, yea, was delivered by the midwifery of Satan suggesting, and his instruments executing his lust as they thought, but fulfilling Gods counsel against themselves. Fourthly, he cannot ravish thy will, *Diabolus non est insusor vitiorum, sed incentor.* He cannot command thee to sinne against thy will; he can *motum agere*, make the soul go faster, that is, on its way, as the winde carries the tide with more swiftnesse, but he cannot turn the stream of the heart contrary to its own course and tendency.

Secondly, Satans power is so limited, that he shall not do what he can. God lets out so much of his wrath as shall praise him, 2.
and be as a stream to set his purpose of love to his Saints on work, and then lets down the flood-gate by restraining the residue thereof; God ever takes him off before he can finish his work on

a Saint. He can (if God ſuffers him) rob the Chriſtian of much of his joy, and diſturb his peace by his cunning inſinuations, but he is under command; he ſtands like a dog by the Table while the Saints ſit at this ſweet feaſt of comfort, but dares not ſtir to roam off their cheer, his Maſters eye is on him. The want of this conſideration loſeth God his praiſe, and us our comfort, God having lock't up our comfort in the performance of our duty. Did the Chriſtian conſider what Satans power is, and who damms it up; This would alwayes be a Song of praiſe in his mouth. Hath Satan power to rob and burn, kill and ſlay, torment the body, diſtreſſe the minde? whom may I thank that I am in any of theſe out of his hands? doth Satan love one better than *Job*? or am I out of ſight, or beſide his walk? is his courage cool'd, or his wrath appeaſ'd, that I ſcape ſo well? no, none of theſe, his wrath is not againſt one, but all the Saints; his eye is on thee, and his arme can reach thee; his ſpirit is not cow'd, nor his ſtomack ſtay'd with thoſe millions he hath devoured, but keen as ever; yea, ſharper, becauſe now he ſees God ready to take away, and the end of the world drawing on ſo faſt. 'Tis thy God alone whom thou art beholden to for all this, his eye keepeth thee; when Satan finds the *good man* aſleep, then he finds our *good God* awake; therefore thou art not conſumed, becauſe he changeth not. Did his eye ſlumber or wander one moment, there would need no other flood to drown thee, yea, the whole world, than what would come out of this dragons mouth.

3. Thirdly, Satans power is miniſterial, appointed by God for the ſervice and benefit of the Saints: 'Tis true (as its ſaid of the proud *Aſſyrian*,) *he weaneth not ſo, neither doth his heart think ſo*; but it is in his heart to deſtroy thoſe he tempts: but no matter what he thinks: as *Luther* comforted himſelfe, when told what had paſſed at the Diet at *Noremburg* againſt the Proteſtants, that *it was decreed one way there, but otherwiſe in heaven*; ſo for the Saints comfort, the thoughts which God thinks to them are peace, while Satans are ruine to their graces, and deſtruction to their ſouls; and his counſel ſhall ſtand in ſpite of the devil. The very *mittimus* which God makes, when he commits any of his Saints to the devils priſon, runs thus, *Deliver ſuch a one to Satan for the deſtruction of the fleſh, that the ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus*, 1 Cor. 5. 5. ſo that tempted Saints may

Iſa. 10. 7.

ſay,

say, we had perished if we had not perished to our own thinking. This *Leviathan*, while he thinks to swallow them up, is but sent of God, (as the whale to *Jonah*) to waft them safe to land. *Some of them of understanding shall fall to try them, and to purge them, and to make them white*, Dan. 11. 35. This God intends when he lets his children fall into temptation, as we do with our linnen, the spots they get at our feasts are taken out by washing, rubbing and laying them out to bleech. The Saints spots are most got in peace, plenty and prosperity, and they never recover their whiteness to such a degree as when they come from under Satans scouring. We do too little, not to feare Satan, we should comfort our selves with the usefulness and subserviency of his temptations to our good. *All things are yours*, who are Christs. He that hath given life to be yours, hath given death also. He that hath given heaven for your inheritance, *Paul* and *Cephas*, his Ministers and Ordinances to help you thither; hath given the world with all the afflictions of it, yea, the Prince of it too, with all his wrath and power in order to the same end. This indeed is love and wisdom in a riddle, but you who have the Spirit of Christ can unfold it.

CHAP. V.

Of the time when, the place where, and the subjects whom Satan rules.

Against the Rulers of the darkness of this world.

THese words contain the third Branch in the Description of our great enemy the devil; and they hold forth the proper seat of his Empire, with a threefold boundary; he is not *Lord over all*, that is, the incommunicable title of God, but a *Ruler of the darkness of this world*, where the time, place, and subjects of his Empire are stinted.

1. The time when this Prince hath his rule, *In this world*, that is, now, not hereafter.

2. The place where he rules, *In this world*, that is, here below, not in heaven.

3. The ſubjects or perſons whom he rules, not all in this lower-world neither; and they are wrapt up in theſe words: *The darkneſſe of this world.* Firſt, of the firſt boundary.

SECT. 1.

1. The time when he rules: ſo this word (world) may be taken in the text for that little ſpot of time, which (like an inconſiderable parentheſis) is claſp't in on either ſide with vaſt eternity; call'd ſometimes the *preſent world.* On this ſtage of time this mock-King acts the part of a Prince, but when Chriſt comes to take down this ſcaffold at the end of this world, then he ſhall be degraded, his crown taken off, his ſword broke over his head, and he hiſt off with ſcorne and ſhame; yea, of a Prince become a cloſe priſoner in hell; no more then ſhall he infeſt the Saints, no nor rule the wicked: but he with them, and they with him, ſhall lie under the immediate execution of Gods wrath, for this very end Chriſt hath his Pattent and Commiſſion, which he will not give up, *till he ſhall have put down all rule*, then and not till then will he deliver up his Oeconomical Kingdom to his Father, when he ſhall have put down all rule; *for he muſt reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.* Satan is caſt already, his doom is paſt upon him, as *Adams* was upon his firſt ſin, but full execution is ſtayed till the end of the world. The devil knows it, it is an Article in his Creed, which made him trembling ask Chriſt why he came *to torment him before his time.*

Tit. 2. 12.

1 Cor. 15. 24, 25.

Uſe. 1. Firſt, this brings ill newes to the wicked. Your Prince cannot long ſit in his throne, ſinners at preſent have a merry time of it, if it would hold; they rejoyce, while Chriſts Diſciples weep and mourne; they ruffle in their ſilkes, while the Saint goes in his rags. Princes are not more careful to oblige their Courtiers with penſions and preferments, than the devil is to gratifie his followers. He hath his rewards alſo; *All this will*

will I give thee; *Am not I able to promote thee*, ſaith *Balak* to *Balaam*? O 'tis ſtrange, (and yet not ſtrange, conſidering the degeneracy of mans nature) to ſee how Satan carries ſinners after him with this golden hook. Let him but preſent ſuch a bait as honour, pelfe or pleaſure, and their hearts skip after it, as a dog would at a cruſt; he makes them ſinne for a morſel of bread: O the naughty heart of man loves the wages of unrighteouſneſſe, (which the devil promiſeth) ſo dearly, that it feares not the dreadful wages which the great God threatens. As ſometimes you ſhall ſee a Spaniel ſo greedy of a bone, that he'll leap into the very river for it, if you throw it thither, and by that time he comes with much ado thither, 'tis ſunk, and he gets nothing but a mouth-full of water for his pains: Thus ſinners will after their deſired pleaſures, honours and profits, ſwimming through the very threatenings of the Word to them, and ſometimes they loſe even what they gaped for here. Thus *God kept Balaam*, (as *Balak* told him) *from honour*, Numb. 24. 11. But however they ſpeed here, they are ſure to loſe themſelves everlaſtingly without repentance. They that are reſolved they will have theſe things, are the men that fall into the devils ſnare, and are led into thoſe fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which will drown them in deſtruction and perdition, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. O poor ſinners! were it not wiſdom before you truck with the devil, to enquire what title he can give you to theſe goodly vanityes? will he ſettle them as a free eſtate upon you? can he ſecure your bargain, and keep you from ſuits of law? or is he able to put two lives into the purchaſe, that when you dye, you may not be left deſtitute in another world? Alas, poor wretches! you ſhall ere long ſee what a cheat he hath put on you, from whom you are like to have nought but *Caveat emptor*, Let the buyer look to that? yea, this great Prince that is ſo brag, to tell what he will give you, muſt down himſelfe; and a ſad Prince muſt needs make a ſad Court; O what howling will there then be of Satan and his vaſſals together! O but, ſaith the ſinner, the pleaſures and honours ſinne and Satan offer are preſent, and that which Chriſt promiſeth we muſt ſtay for: This indeed is that which takes moſt. *Demas*, ſaith *Paul*, *forſook me, having loved this preſent world*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. 'Tis preſent indeed (ſinners,) for you cannot ſay it will be yours the next moment; your preſent felicity is going, and the Saints (though future,) is coming never to

go; and who for a gulpe of pottage, and ſenſual enjoyments at preſent, would part with a reverſion of ſuch a Kingdom? except thou art of his minde, who thought he had nothing, but what he had ſwallowed down his throat.

Hæc habeo quæ edi, quaque exaturata libido
——Hauſit.

which *Cicero* could ſay, was more fit to be writ on an oxes grave than a mans. Vile wretch, that thinkeſt 'tis not better to deale with God for time, than the devil for ready pay. *Tertullian* wonders at the folly of the *Romans* ambition, who would endure all manner of hardſhip in field and fight, for no other thing but to obtain at laſt the honour to be Conſul, which he calls *unius anni volaticum gaudium*, a joy that flies away at the yeares end. But O what deſperate madneſſe is it of ſinners then, not to endure a little hardſhip here, but entaile on themſelves the eternal wrath of God hereafter, for the ſhort feaſt, and running banquet their luſts entertain them here withal: which often is not *gaudium unius horæ*, a joy that laſts an houre.

Uſe 2. Secondly, let this encourage thee, O Chriſtian, in thy conflict with Satan, the skirmiſh may be ſharp, but it cannot be long. Let him tempt thee, and his wicked inſtruments trounce thee, 'tis but a little while, and thou ſhalt be rid of both their evil neighbourhoods. The cloud while it drops is rolling over thy head, and then comes faire weather, an eternal Sunſhine of glory. Canſt thou not watch with Chriſt one houre or two? keep the field a few dayes? if yield, thou art undone for ever; perſevere but while the battel is over, and thine enemy ſhall never rally more; bid faith look through the key-hole of the promiſe, and tell thee what it ſees there laid up for him that overcomes: bid it liſten and tell thee whether it cannot hear the ſhout of thoſe crowned Saints, as of thoſe that are dividing the ſpoile, and receiving the reward of all their ſervices and ſufferings here on earth: and doeſt thou ſtand on the other ſide, afraid to wet thy foot with thoſe ſufferings and temptations, which like a little plaſh of water, run between thee and glory?

SECT.

SECT. 2.

Secondly, the devils Empire is confined to *place* as well as time: he is the Ruler of this lower world, not of the heavenly. The higheſt the devil can go is the aire, call'd the Prince thereof, as being the utmoſt marches of his Empire, he hath nothing to do with the upper world. Heaven feares no devil, and therefore its gates ſtand alwayes open; never durſt this fiend look into that holy place ſince he was firſt expell'd, but rangeth to and fro here below as a vagabond creature, excommunicated the preſence of God, doing what miſchief he can to Saints in their way to heaven; but is not this matter of great joy, that Satan hath no power there, where the Saints happineſſe lyes? What haſt thou (Chriſtian) which thou needeſt value that is not there? Thy Chriſt is there, and if thou loveſt him, thy heart alſo, which lives in the boſome of its beloved. Thy friends, and kindred in Chriſt are there, or expected; with whom thou ſhalt have a merry meeting in thy Fathers houſe, notwithſtanding the ſnare on *Tabor*, the plots of Satan which lie in the way. O friends get a title to that Kingdome, and you are above the flight of this Kite. This made *Job* a happy man indeed, who when the devil had plundered him to his skin, and worried him almoſt out of that too, could then vouch Chriſt in the face of death and devils to be his Redeemer, whom he ſhould with thoſe eyes, that now ſtood full with briniſh teares, behold, and that for himſelfe as his own portion. It is ſad with him indeed, who is robbed of all he is worth at once, but this can never be ſaid of a Saint. The devil took away *Jobs* purſe, (as I may ſay) which put him into ſome ſtraits, but he had a God in heaven that put him into ſtock again. Some ſpending money thou haſt at preſent in thy purſe, in the activity of thy faith, the evidence of thy ſon-ſhip, and comfort flowing from the ſame, enlargement in duty and the like, which Satan may for a time diſturb, yea, deprive thee of, but he cannot come to the rolls, to blot thy name out of the book of life; he cannot null thy faith, make void thy relation, dry up thy comfort in the ſpring, though dam up the ſtream; nor hinder thee a happy iſſue of thy whole war with ſinne, though worſt thee in a private skirmiſh; theſe all

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are kept in heaven, among Gods own Crown-Jewels, who is said to keep us by his *power through faith unto salvation.*

SECT. 3.

3. The third boundary of the devils Principality is in regard of his subjects, and they are described here to be *the darkness of this world*, that is, such who are in darkness. This word is used sometimes to expresse the desolate condition of a creature in some great distresse, *Isa.* 50. *He that walks in darkness, and sees no light*; sometimes to expresse the nature of all sinne; so, *Eph.* 5. 1. sinne is called the work of darkness; sometimes the particular sin of ignorance; often set out by the darkness of the night, blindness of the eye, all these I conceive may be mean't, but chiefly the latter; for though Satan makes a foule stir in the soul; that is, in the dark of sorrow, whether it be from outward crosses or inward desertions; yet if the creature be not in the darkness of sinne at the same time, though he may disturb his peace as an enemy, yet cannot be said to rule as a Prince. Sin only sets Satan in the throne; so that I shall take the words in the two latter Interpretations.

First, for the darkness of sin in general.

Secondly, for the darkness of ignorance in special; and the sense will be, that the devils rule is over those that are in a state of sinne and ignorance, not over those who are sinful or ignorant, so he would take hold of Saints as well as others; but over those who are in a state of sin, which is set out by the abstract, *Ruler of the darkness*, the more to expresse the fulnesse of the sin and ignorance that possesseth Satans slaves; and the Notes will be two.

First, Every soul in a state of sin is under the rule of Satan.

Secondly, Ignorance above other sins enslaves a soul to Satan, and therefore all sins are set out by that which chiefly expresseth this, *viz.* darkness.

Doct. Every soul in a state of sin is under the rule of Satan; under which point these two things must be enquired.

First, the reason why sin is set out by darkness.

Secondly, how every one in such a state appears to be under the devils rule. For the first, First,

First, ſin may be called darkneſſe, becauſe the ſpring and common cauſe of ſin in man is darkneſſe. The external cauſe Satan, who is the great promoter of it, he is a curſed ſpirit held in chaines of darkneſſe. The internal is the blindneſſe and darkneſſe of the ſoul: we may ſay when any one ſins, he doth he knowes not what, as Chriſt ſaid of his murtherers. Did the creature know the true worth of the ſoul, (which he now ſells for a ſong,) the glorious amiable nature of God and his holy wayes, the matchleſſe love of God in Chriſt, the poiſonful nature of ſin, and all theſe not by a ſudden beam darted into the window at a Sermon, and gone again, like a flaſh of lightning, but by an abiding light; this would ſpoile the Devils market, and poor creatures would not readily take this toad into their boſomes; ſin goes in a diſguiſe, and ſo is welcome. 1.

Secondly, it is darkneſſe, becauſe it brings darkneſſe into the ſoul, and that naturally and judicially.

First, Naturally. There is a noxious quality in ſin offenſive to the underſtanding, which is to the ſoul what the eye and palate are to the body; It diſcerns of things, and diſtinguiſheth true from falſe, as the eye white from black: It tryeth words as the mouth taſteth meats. Now as there are ſome things bad for the ſight, and others bad for the palate vitiating it, ſo that it ſhall not know ſweet from bitter; ſo here ſin beſots the creature, and makes it injudicious, that he who could ſee ſuch a practice abſurd and baſe in others before, when once he hath drunk of this inchanting cup himſelf, (as one that hath fordone his underſtanding) is mad of it himſelf, not able now to ſee the evil of it, or uſe his reaſon againſt it. Thus *Saul* before he had debauch't his conſcience, thinks the Witch worthy of death; but after he had trodden his conſcience hard with other foul ſins, goes to ask counſel of one himſelf.

Again, ſin brings darkneſſe judicially; ſuch have been threatened, whoſe eare God hath been trying to open and inſtruct, and have run out of Gods ſchool into the devils, by *rebelling againſt light*, that they ſhall *die without knowledge*, *Job* 36. 10, 12. What ſhould the candle burn waſt, when the creature hath more minde to play than work?

Thirdly, Sinne runs into darkneſſe. Impoſtors bring in their *damnable Hereſies privily*, like thoſe who ſell bad ware, loath to 3.

come to the Market, where the Standard tries all; but put it off in ſecret: ſo in moral wickedneſſe, ſinners like beaſts go out in the night for their prey, loath to be ſeen, afraid to come where they ſhould be found out. Nothing more terrible to ſinners than light of truth, *John* 3. 19. *Becauſe their deeds are evil.* *Felix* was ſo netled with what *Paul* ſpake, that he could not ſit out the Sermon, but flings away in haſte, and adjourns the hearing of *Paul* till a convenient ſeaſon, but he never could finde one. The Sun is not more troubleſome in hot Countreys, than truth is to thoſe who ſit under the powerful preaching of it; and therefore as thoſe ſeldome come abroad in the heat of the day, and when they muſt, have their devices over their heads to skreen them from the Sun; ſo ſinners ſhun as much as may be the preaching of the Word; but if they muſt go to keep in with their relations, or for other carnal advantages, they, if poſſible, will keep off the power of truth, either by ſleeping the Sermon away, or prating it away with any fooliſh imagination which Satan ſends to beare them company and chat with them at ſuch a time: or by chooſing ſuch a coole Preacher to ſit under, whoſe toothleſſe diſcourſe ſhall rather flatter than trouble, rather tickle their fancy than prick their conſciences; and then their ſore eyes can look upon the light. *Floreſcentem amant veritatem qui non redarguentem*: they dare handle and look on the ſword with delight when in a rich ſcabbard, who would run away to ſee it drawn.

4. Fourthly, Sin is darkneſſe for its uncomfortableneſſe, and that in a threefold reſpect.

1. Firſt, Darkneſſe is uncomfortable, as it ſhuts out of all imployment. What could the Egyptians do under the plague of darkneſſe but ſit ſtill? and this to an active ſpirit is trouble enough. Thus in a ſtate of ſinne man is an unſerviceable creature, he can do his God no ſervice acceptably, ſpoiles every thing he takes in hand, like one running up and down in a ſhop when windows ſhut, doth nothing right. It may be writ on the grave of every ſinner, who lives and dyes in that ſtate, Here lyes the man, that never did God an hours work in all his life.

2. Secondly, Darkneſſe is uncomfortable in point of enjoyment; be there never ſuch rare pictures in the roome, if dark, who the better? A ſoul in a ſtate of ſinne may poſſeſſe much, but enjoyes nothing: this is a ſore evil, and little thought of. One thought

of

of its ſtate of enmity to God, would drop bitterneſſe into every cup; all he hath ſmells of hell-fire, and a man at a rich feaſt would enjoy it ſure but little, if he ſmelt fire, ready to burn his houſe and himſelf in it.

Thirdly, Darkneſſe fills with terrours, feares in the night are moſt dreadful; a ſtate of ſin is a ſtate of feare. Men that owe much, have no quiet, but when they are a ſleep, and not then neither, the cares and feares of the day ſink ſo deep, as makes their reſt troubleſome and unquiet in the night. The wicked hath no peace, but when his conſcience ſleeps, and that ſleeps but brokenly, awaking often with ſick fits of terrour: when he hath moſt proſperity, he is ſcared like a flock of birds in a corn-field at every piece going off. He eats in feare, and drinks in feare; when afflicted, he expects worſe behinde, and knows not what this cloud may ſpread to, and where it may lay him; whether in hell or not he knows not, and therefore trembles (as one in the dark) not knowing but his next ſtep may be into the pit. 3.

Fifthly, Sinne leads to utter darkneſſe; utter darkneſſe is darkneſſe to the utmoſt. Sin in its full height, and wrath in its full heat together; both univerſal, both eternal. Here's ſome mixture, peace and trouble, paine and eaſe; ſin and thoughts of repenting, ſin and hopes of pardon; there the fire of wrath ſhall burn without ſlacking, and ſin run parallel with torment; hell-birds are no changelings; their torment makes them ſin, and their ſin feeds their torment, both unquenchable, one being fuel to another. 5.

Secondly, let us ſee how it appears, that ſuch as are under a ſtate of ſin, are under the rule of Satan. Sinners are call'd the children of the devil, 1 *John* 3. 10. and who rules the childe but the Father? they are ſlaves; who rules the ſlave but the Maſter? they are the very manſion-houſe of the devil; where hath a man command, but in his own houſe? *I will go to my houſe*, (*Mat.* 12. 44. As if the devil had ſaid, I have walk't among the Saints of God, to and fro, knocking at this door and that, and none will bid me welcome, I can finde no reſt; well I know where I may be bold; I'le even go to my own houſe, and there I am ſure to rule the roſte without controul; and *when he comes, he findes it empty, ſwept and garniſhed*; that is, all ready for his entertainment. Servants make the houſe trim and handſome 2.

against their Master come home, especially when he brings guests with him, as here the devil brings *seven more*. Look to to the sinner, there is nothing he is or hath, but the devil hath dominion over it: *He rules the whole man*, their minds blinding them. All the sinners apprehension of things are shaped by Satan: he looks on sinne with the devils spectacles: he reads the Word with the devils comment: he sees nothing in its native colours, but is under a continual delusion. The very wisdome of a wicked man is said to be *devillish*, *Iames* 3. 15. δαιμονιώδης, or *devil-like*, because taught by the devil, and also such as the Devils is, *wise onely to do evil. He commands their Wills*, though not to force them, yet effectually to draw them. *His work* (saith Christ) *ye will do*. You are resolved on your way, the devil hath got your hearts, and him you will obey: and therefore when Christ comes to recover his throne, he findes the soul in an uproare, as *Ephesus* at *Pauls* Sermon, crying him down, and *Diana* up. We will not have this man reigne over us, what is the Almighty that we should serve him? *He rules over all their members*, they are call'd *weapons of unrighteousnesse*, all at the devils service; as all the armes of a Kingdome, to defend the Prince against any that shall invade. The head to plot, the hand to act, the feet swift to carry the body up and down about his service; *He rules over all he hath*. Let God come in a poor member, and beseech him to lend him a penny, or bestow a morsel to refresh his craving bowels; and the covetous wretch his hand of charity is withered, that he cannot stretch it forth; but let Satan call, and his purse flies open and heart also. *Nabal* that could not spare a few fragments for *David* and his followers, this churle could make *a feast like a Prince*, to satiate his own lust of gluttony and drunkennesse. *He commands their time*, when God calls to duty, to pray, to hear, no time all the week to be spared for that; but if the sinner hears there is a merry meeting, a knot of good fellows at the Alehouse; all is thrown aside to wait on his Lord and Master; calling left at six and sevens, yea, wife and children crying, (may be starving) while the wretch is pouring out their very blood, (in wasting their livelihood) at the foot of his lust. The sinner is in the *bond of iniquity*, and being bound he must obey. He is said to go after his lust, *as the fool to the stocks*, *Prov.* 7. 22.

7. 22. The pinion'd malefactour can aſſoon untie his own armes and legs, and ſo run from his Keeper, as he from his luſts. *They are ſervants*, and their members inſtruments of ſin: even as the Workman takes up his ax and it reſiſts not; ſo doth Satan diſpoſe of them, except God ſaith nay.

See here the deplored condition of every one in a ſtate of ſin. *Uſe* He is under the rule of Satan, and govetnment of hell. What tongue can utter, what heart can conceive the miſery of this ſtate? It was a diſmal day which Chriſt foretold, *Matth. 24. When the abomination of deſolation ſhould be ſeen, ſtanding in the Holy place; then (ſaith Chriſt) let him that is in Judea flee into the mountains.* But what was that to this? they were but men, though abominable; theſe devils. They did but ſtand in the material Temple, and defile and deface that: but theſe diſplay their banners in the ſouls of men, pollute that throne, which is more glorious than the material heaven it ſelf, made for God alone to ſit in. They exerciſed their cruelties at furtheſt on the bodies of men, killing and torturing them: here the precious ſouls of men are deſtroyed. When *David* would curſe to purpoſe the enemies of God, he prayes, that *Satan may be at their right hand.* 'Tis ſtrange ſinners ſhould no more tremble at this, who ſhould they ſee but their ſwine, or a beaſt bewitch't and poſſeſt of the devil run headlong into the ſea, would cry out as half undone: and is not one ſoul more worth than all theſe? what a plague is it to have Satan poſſeſſe thy heart and ſpirit, hurrying thee in the fury of thy luſts to perdition? O poor man? what a ſad change haſt thou made? Thou who wouldeſt not ſit under the meek and peaceful Government of God thy rightful Lord, art paid for thy rebellion againſt him, in the cruelty of this Tyrant who writes all his Lawes in the blood of his ſubjects, and why will you ſit any longer, (O ſinners) under the ſhadow of this *Bramble*, from whom you can expect nothing but eternal fire, to come at laſt and devour you? Behold, Chriſt is in the field, ſent of God to recover his right, and your liberty. His royal Standard is pitch't in the Goſpel, and Proclamation made, that if any poor ſinners, weary of the Devils Government, and heavy laden with the miſerable chaines of his ſpiritual bondage, (ſo as theſe irons of his ſins enter into his very ſoul to afflict it with the ſenſe of them) ſhall thus come, and repair to Chriſt: he ſhall have protection

tection from Gods juſtice, the devils wrath, and ſins dominion;
Mat. 11. 28. In a word, *he ſhall have reſt*, and that *glorious*. Uſually when
Iſa. 11. 10. a people have heen ground with the oppreſſion of ſome bloody Tyrant, they are apt enough to long for a change, and to liſten to any overture that gives them hope of liberty, though reached by the hand of a ſtranger, who may prove as bad as the other, yet bondage is ſo grievous, that people deſire to change, (as ſick men their beds) though they finde little eaſe thereby. Why then ſhould deliverance be unwelcome to you, ſinners? Deliverance brought not by a ſtranger whom you need feare, what his deſigne is upon you; but your near Kinſman in blood, who cannot mean you ill, but he muſt firſt hate his own fleſh; and whoever did that? To be ſure not he, who though he took part of
Heb. 2. 14,15. our fleſh, that he might have the right of being our Redeemer: yet would have no kindred with us in the ſinfulneſſe of our nature. And 'tis ſin that makes us cruel, yea, to our own fleſh. What can you expect from him but pure mercy, who is himſelf pure? They are *the mercies of the wicked which are cruel*. Be-
Heb. 4. 15. lieve it (Sirs) Chriſt counts it his honour, that he is a King of a willing people, and not of ſlaves. He comes to make you free, not to bring you into bondage; to make you Kings, not vaſſals. None give Chriſt an evil word, but thoſe who never were his ſubjects. Enquire but of thoſe who have tried both Satans ſervice and Chriſts; they are beſt able to reſolve you what they are. You ſee when a ſoul comes over from Satans quarters unto Chriſt, and has but once the experience of that ſweetneſſe which is in his ſervice, there is no getting him back to his old drudgery, as they ſay of thoſe, who come out of the North, (which is cold and poor) they like the warme South ſo well, they ſeldome or never go back more. What more dreadful to a gracious ſoul than to be delivered into the hands of Satan? or fall under the power of his luſts? It would chooſe rather to leap into a burning furnace, than be commanded by them. This is the great requeſt a childe of God makes, that he would rather whip him in his houſe, than turne him out of it to become a prey to Satan. O ſinners, did you know (which you cannot till you come over to Chriſt and embrace him as your Lord and Saviour) what the priviledges of Chriſts ſervants are, and what gentle uſage Saints have at Chriſts hands, you would ſay thoſe were the only happy men in the

the world, which ſtand continually before him. His lawss are writ, not with his ſubjects blood (as Satans are) but with his own. All his commands are acts of grace; 'tis a favour to be employed about them. To you 'tis given to believe, yea, to *ſuffer*. Such an honour the Saints eſteem it to do any thing he commands, that they count God rewards them for one piece of ſervice, if he enables them for another. *This I had*, (ſaith *David*) *becauſe I kept thy Precepts*, *Pſal.* 119. 56. what was the great reward he got? ſee, *ver.* 55. *I have remembred thy Name, O Lord, in the night, and kept thy Law*; then followes, *This I had*: He got more ſtrength and skill to keep the Law for the future, by his obedience paſt, and was he not well paid (think you) for his pains? *There's fruit* even in *holineſſe*, the Chriſtian hath in hand, which he eats while he is at work, that may ſtay his ſtomack until the full reward comes, which is *æternal life*, *Rom.* 6. 22. Jeſus Chriſt is a Prince that loves to ſee his people thrive, and grow rich under his Government. This is he whom ſinners are ſo afraid of, that when he ſets open their priſon, and bids them come forth, they chooſe rather to bore their eares to the devils poſt, than enjoy this bleſſed liberty. It is no wonder that ſome of the Saints have (indeed) *when tortured, not accepted deliverance, that they might obtain a better reſurrection.* But what a riddle is this, that forlorne ſouls bound with the chaines of their luſts, and the irreſiſtible decree of God for their damnation, (if they believe not on the Lord Jeſus,) ſhould, as they are driving to execution, refuſe deliverance? This may ſet heaven and earth on wondring. Surely, dying in their ſins, they cannot hope for a better reſurrection than they have a death. I am afraid rather, that they do not firmly believe they ſhall have any reſurrection; and then no wonder they make ſo light of Chriſts offer, who think themſelves ſafe, when once earth't in this burrow of the grave. But let ſinners know, 'tis not the grave can hold them, when the day of Aſſize comes, and the Judge calls for the priſoners to the bar. The grave was never intended to be a Sanctuary to defend ſinners from the hand of juſtice, but a cloſe priſon, to ſecure them againſt the day of tryal, that they may be forth-coming. Then ſinners ſhall be digg'd out of their burroughs, and dragg'd out of their holes to anſwer their contempt of Chriſt and his grace. O how will you

Phil. 1. 29.

Heb. 11. 35.

you be aſtoniſh't to ſee him become your Judge, whom you now refuſe to be your King? to hear that Goſpel witneſſe againſt you for your damnation, which at the ſame time ſhall acquit others for their ſalvation? what think you to do, ſinners, in that day? wilt thou cry and ſhreame for mercy at Chriſts hands? Alas, when the ſentence is paſt, thy face will immediately be covered: condemned priſoners are not allowed to ſpeak: teares then are unprofitable, when no place left for repentance, either in Chriſts heart or thine own. Or meaneſt thou to apply thy ſelf to thy old Lord, in whoſe ſervice thou haſt undone thy ſoul, and cry to him, as ſhe to *Ahab*, Help, O King: Alas, thine eye ſhall ſee him in the ſame condemnation with thy ſelf. Hadſt thou not better now renounce the devils rule, whileſt thou mayeſt be received into Chriſts Government? pour out thy tears and cries now for mercie and grace when they are to be had, than to ſave them for another world to no purpoſe?

Queſt. But poſſibly, thou wilt ſay, *How may I that am a home-borne ſlave to ſin, yea, who have lived ſo many years under his curſed rule, get out of his dominion and power, and be tranſlated into the Kingdom of Chriſt?*

Anſw. The difficulty of this great work lies not in prevailing with Chriſt, to receive thee for his ſubject, who refuſeth none that in truth of heart deſire to come under his ſhadow. It doth not ſtand with his deſigne to reject any ſuch. Do Phyſitians uſe to chide their Patients away? Lawyers their Clients? or Generals diſcourage thoſe who fall off from the enemy, and come to their ſide? ſurely no. When *David* was in the field, 'tis ſaid, 1 *Sam.* 22. 2. *Every one that was in diſtreſſe, in debt, or in diſcontent gathered themſelves to him, and he became a Captain over them.* And ſo will Chriſt be to every one that is truly diſcontented with Satans Government, and upon an inward diſlike thereof repairs to him. But the maine buſineſſe will be to take thee off from thy engagements to thy luſts and Satan, till which be done, Chriſt will not own thee as a ſubject, but look on thee as a Spy. It fares with ſinners as with ſervants. There may be fallings out between them and their Maſters, and high words paſſe between them, that you would think they would take up their pack and be gone in all haſte: but the fray is ſoone over, and by next morning all is forgot, and the ſervants are as hard at their work as ever.

O how oft are ſinners taking their leave of their luſts, and giving warning to their old Maſters, they will repent and reform, and what not? but in a few dayes they have repented of their repentance, and deformed their reformings, which ſhews they were drunk with ſome paſſion, when they thought or ſpake this; and no wonder they reverſe all when they come to their true temper. Now becauſe Satan has many policies, by which he uſeth to keep his hold of ſinners; I ſhall diſcover ſome of them, which if thou canſt withſtand, it will be no hard matter to bring thee out of his power and rule.

1. Firſt, Satan doth his utmoſt, that ſinners may not have any ſerious thoughts of the miſerable ſtate they are in, while under his rule; or hear any thing from others, which might the leaſt unſettle their mindes from his ſervice; Conſideration (he knowes) is the firſt ſtep to repentance: He that doth not conſider his wayes what they are, and whither they lead him, is not like to change them in haſte. *Iſrael* ſtirr'd not, while *Moſes* came, and had ſome diſcourſe with them about their woful ſlavery, and the gracious thoughts of God towards them; and then they begin to deſire to be gone. *Pharaoh* ſoon bethought him what conſequence might follow upon this, and cunningly labours to prevent by doubling their task: *Ye are idle, ye are idle, therefore ye ſay, Let us go, and do ſacrifice to the Lord. Go therefore and work*, Exod. 5. 17, 18. As if he had ſaid, Have you ſo much ſpare time to think of gadding into the wilderneſſe, and have you your ſeditious Conventicles, (*Moſes* and you) to lay your plots together? I'le break the knot, give them more work, ſcatter them all over the land to gather ſtraw, that they may not meet to entice one anothers hearts from my ſervice. Thus Satan is very jealous of the ſinner, afraid every Chriſtian that ſpeaks to him, or Ordinance he hears ſhould inveigle him. By his good-will he ſhould come at neither, no, nor have a thought of heaven or hell from one end of the week to the other, and that he may have as few as may be, he keeps him full handed with work. The ſinner grindes, and he is filling the hopper, that the Mill may not ſtand ſtill. He is with the ſinner as ſoone as he wakes, and fills his wretched heart with ſome wicked thoughts, which as a morning draught may keep him from the infection of any ſavour of good, that may be breathed on him by others in

the day-time. All the day long he watcheth him, as the Master would do his man, that he feares will run away. And at night he like a careful Jayler locks him up again in his chamber with more bolts and fetters upon him, not suffering him to sleep as he lies on his bed, *till he hath done some mischief.* Ah, poor wretch! Luke 15. was ever slave so look't to? as long as the devil can keep thee thus, thou art his own sure enough. The Prodigal *came to himself*, before he came to his Father. He considered with himselfe what a starving condition he was in, his huskes were poor meat, and yet he had not enough of them neither, and how easily he might mend his commons, if he had but grace to go home, and humble himself to his Father. Now, and not till now he goes: Resolve thus poor sinner to sit down and consider what thy state is, and what it might be, if thou wouldest but change the bondage of Satan for the sweet Government of Jesus Christ. First, ask thy soul, whether the devil can, after thou hast worne out thy miserable life here in his drudg'ry, prefer thee to a happy state in the other world, or so much as secure thee from a state of torment and wo? If he cannot, whether there be not one *Jesus Christ*, who is able and willing to do it? and if so, whether it be not bloody cruelty to thy precious soul, to stay any longer under the shadow of this bramble, when thou mayest make so blessed a change? A few of these thoughts abidingly laid home to thy soul, (may God striking in with them) shake the foundations of the devils prison, and make thee haste as fast from him, as one out of a house on fire about his eares.

2ly. Satan hath his instruments to oppose the messengers and o- 2. vertures, which God sends by them to bring the sinner out of Satans rule. When *Moses* comes to deliver *Israel* out of the *Egyptian* bondage, up start *Jannes* and *Jambres* to resist him. When *Paul* preacheth to the *Deputy*, the devil hath his Chaplain at Court to hinder him: *Elimas*, one that was *full of all subtilty and mischief.* Some or other (to be sure) he will finde, when God is parlying with a sinner, and perswading him to come over to Christ, that shall labour to clog the work. Either carnal friends, these he sends to plead his cause, or old companions in wickednesse, these bestir them, one while labouring to jeer him out of his new way, or if that take not, by turning their old love into bitter wrath against him for playing the Apostate,

and

and leaving him ſo. Or if yet he will not be ſtopt in his way, then he hath his daubing Preachers, (ſtill like *Jobs* meſſengers the laſt the worſt) who with their ſoul-flattering, or rather murdering doctrine ſhall go about to heal his wound ſlightly. Now as ever you deſire to get out of Satans bondage, have a care of all theſe, harden thy ſelfe againſt the entreaties of carnal friends and relations. Reſolve, that if thy children ſhould hang about thy knees to keep thee from Chriſt, thou wilt throw them away. If thy father and mother ſhould lie proſtrate at thy foot, rather than not go to Chriſt, to go over their very backs to him. Never can we part with their love upon ſuch advantageous termes as theſe. And for thy brethren in iniquity, I hope thou doeſt not mean to ſtay while thou haſt their good will, then even ask the devils alſo. Heaven is but little worth if thou haſt not a heart to deſpiſe a little ſhame, and beare a few frumps from prophane *Iſhmaels* for thy hopes of it. Let them ſpit on thy face, Chriſt will wipe it off; let them laugh ſo thou winneſt. If they follow not thy example before they dye, the ſhame will be their own; God himſelf ſhall ſpit it on their face before men and Angels, and then kick them into hell. And laſtly, ſcape but the ſnare of thoſe flatterers, who uſe their tongues only to lick ſinners conſciences whole with their *placentia*'s ſoothing doctrine, and thou art faire for a Chriſt; ask not counſel of them, they may go about to give you eaſe, but all thoſe ſtitches with which they ſowe up thy wounds, muſt be ripp't open, or thou dieſt for it.

3. Thirdly, Satan labours to while off the ſinner with delayes. Floating, flitting thoughts of repenting he feares not, he can give ſinners leave to talk what they will do; ſo he can beg time, and by his Art keep ſuch thoughts from coming to a head, and ripening into a preſent reſolution, few are in hell but thought of repenting; but Satan ſo handled the matter, that they could never pitch upon the time in earneſt when to do it. If ever thou meaneſt to get out of his clutches, flie out of his doors, and run for thy life, where-ever this warning finds thee ſtay not, though in the midſt of thy joyes, with which thy luſts entertain thee: As the paper which came to *Brentius*, (from that Senatour his dear friend) took him at ſupper with his wife and children, and bade him flee *citò, citiùs, citiſſimè*; which he did, leaving his dear

company and swet cheare, so do thou or else thou mayest repent thy stay when 'tis too late. A vision charged the *wise men* to go back another way, and not so much as see *Herod*, though he had charged them otherwise. O go not back, drunkard, to thy good fellows, adulterer to thy Queanes; covetous wretch, to thy usury and unlawful gaine: turne another way, and gratifie not the devil a moment. The command saith, now repent; the Imperative hath no future tense. God saith, *To day while it is to day:* The Devil saith To morrow; which wilt thou obey, God or him? Thou sayest, thou meanest at last to do it, then why not now? Wilt thou stand with God for a day or two, huckle with him for a penny? Heaven is not such a hard pennyworth, but thou mayest come up to his termes: And which is the morrow thou meanest? thou hast but a day in thy life for ought thou knowest, where then canst thou finde a morrow for repentance? but shouldest thou have as many dayes to come as *Methuselah* lived, yet know, sin is hereditary, and such sort of diseases grow more upon us with our years. 'Tis with long accustomed sinners, as with those who have sate long under a Government, they rather like to be as they are, (though but ill on it) than think of a change, or like those who in a journey have gone out of their way all the day, will rather take any new way, over hedge and ditch, than think of going so far back to be set right.

4. Fourthly, Satan labours to comprimise the businesse, and bring it to a composition between him and Christ: when conscience will not be pacified, then Satan for quiets sake will yield to something, as *Pharaoh* with *Moses*: after much ado he is willing they should go, *Exod.* 8. 28. *And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wildernesse.* But then comes in his caution, *onely you shall not go very farre away.* Thus Satan will yield the sinner may pray, and hear the Word, and make a goodly Profession, so he doth not go very farre, but that he may have him again at night. If God hath the mattins, he looks for the vigils, and thus he is content the day should be divided. Doth conscience presse a reformation and change of the sinners course, rather than faile, he'll grant that also: yet as *Pharaoh* when he yielded they should go, he meant *their little ones should stay behinde as a pledge for those that went*, Exod. 10. 11.

So

So Satan muſt have ſome one ſinne that muſt be ſpared, and no matter though it be a little one. Now if ever you would get out of the devils rule, make no compoſition with him. Chriſt will be King or no King. Not a hoofe muſt be left behinde, or any thing which may make an errand for thee afterwards to return. Take therefore thy everlaſting farewll of every ſin; as to the ſincere and fixt purpoſe of thy heart, or thou doeſt nothing. *Paul* joynes his faith and his purpoſe together, 2 *Tim.* 3. 10. not the one without the other. At the promulgation of the Law in *Sinai*, God did, as it were, give *Iſrael* the oath of Allegiance to him; then he told them what law he would rule them by, and they gave their conſent: this was the *eſpouſal* which God puts them in minde of, *Jerem.* 2. in which they were ſolemnly married together, as King and ſubjects. Now mark, before God would do this, he will have them out of *Egypt*. They could not obey his Lawes, and *Pharaoh*'s idolatrous cuſtomes alſo; and therefore he will have them out, before he ſolemnly eſpouſeth them to be a Nation peculiarly his. Thou muſt be a widow before Chriſt marry thee, he will not lie by the ſide of a nothers wife. O that it were come to this! then the match would ſoone be made betweene Chriſt and thee. Let me ask thee, poor ſoul, haſt thou ſeriouſly conſidered who Chriſt is; and what his ſweet Government is? and couldeſt thou finde in thy heart (out of an inward abhorrency of Sin and Satan, and a liking to Chriſt) to renounce ſin and Satan, and chooſe Chriſt for thy Lord? Doth thy ſoul ſay as *Rebecca*, *I will go*, if I could tell how to get to him. But alas, I am here a poore priſoner, I cannot ſhake off my fetters, and ſet my ſelf at liberty to come unto Chriſt. Well, poor ſoul, canſt thou groane heartily under thy bondage? then for thy comfort know, thy deliverance is at the door; he that heard the cry of *Iſrael* in *Egypt*, will hear thine alſo, yea, come and ſave thee out of the hands of thy luſts. He will not, as ſome, who entangle thy affections by making love to thee, and then give over the ſuit, and come at thee no more. If Chriſt has won thy heart, he'll be true to thee, and be at all the coſt to bring thee out of thy priſon-houſe alſo; yea, take the paines to come for thee himſelfe, and bring with him theſe wedding-garments in which he will

carry thee from thy prison to his Fathers house with joy, where thou shalt live not only as a subject under his Law, but as a Bride in the bosome of his love, and what can be added to thy happiness more? when thy Prince is thy husband, and that such a Prince to whom all other are vassals, even the Prince of the world himself; and yet so gracious, that his Majesty hinders not his familiar converse with thee a poor creature, but addes to the condescent thereof, therefore God chooseth to mixe names of greatnesse and relation together; the one to sweeten the other: *Thy Maker is thy husband, thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel. The God of the whole earth shall he be called, Isa.* 54. 5. And to usher in those promises with titles of greatest dread and terrour to the creature, that hold forth the greatest condescensions of love; How can God stoop lower than to come and dwell with a poor humble soul? which is more, than if he had said such a one should dwell with him; for a beggar to live at Court is not so much as the King to dwell with him in this cottage. Yet this promise is usher'd in with the most magnificent titles; *Thus saith the high and lofty one, that inhabits eternity, whose Name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, Isa.* 57. 15. and why such titles? but to take away the feares, which his Saints are prone to take up from them. Will the high and lofty One, (saith the humble soul) look on me a poor worme? will the holy God come near such an unclean creature, (saith the contrite one?) *Isaiah* himself cried he was undone at the sight of God, and this attribute proclaim'd before him. *Isa.* 6. Now God prefixeth these, that the creature may know his Majesty and holinesse, which seems so terrible to us, are no prejudice to his love; yea, so gracious a Prince as thy husband, that he delights rather his Saints should call him by names of love, than state. *Thou shalt call me Ishi, and shalt no more call me Baali, Hos.* 2. 16. That is, my husband, not my Lord.

SECT. 4.

Doct. The second point follows. Ignorance above other sinnes enslaves a soul to Satan, a knowing man may be his slave, but an

an ignorant one can be no other. Knowledge doth not make the heart good, but it is impoſſible that without knowledge it ſhould be good. There are ſome ſins which an ignorant perſon cannot commit, there are more which he cannot but commit: Knowledge is the Key, *Luke* 11. 52. Chriſt the door, *John* 15. Chriſt opens Heaven, Knowledge opens Chriſt. In three particulars the Point will appear more fully.

Firſt, ignorance opens a door for ſin to enter.

Secondly, as ignorance lets ſin in, ſo it locks it up in the ſoul, and the ſoul in it.

Thirdly, as it locks it up, ſo it ſhuts all meanes of help out.

Firſt, ignorance opens the door for Satan to enter in with his troops of luſts; where the watch is blinde, the City is ſoon taken: an ignorant man ſins, and like drunken *Lot*, he knowes not when the tempter comes, nor when he goes: he is like a man that walks in his ſleep, knows not where he is, nor what he does. *Father, forgive them,* (ſaith Chriſt) *they know not what they do.* The Apoſtle, 1 *Corinth.* 15. having reproved the ſenſuality of ſome, *verſe* 32. who made the conſideration of death, by which others are awed from ſinne, a provocative to ſin, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall die,* he gives an account of this abſurd reaſoning; *All have not the knowledge of God.* An ignorant perſon is a man in ſhape, and a beaſt in heart. *There is no knowledge in the land,* ſaith the Prophet, *Hoſea* 4. 2. and ſee what a regiment follows this blinde Captain, ſwearing, lying, killing, ſtealing, and what not? We reade, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. of ſome *laden with ſins*; here are trees full of bitter fruit, and what dung ſhall we find at the root, that makes them ſo fruitfull but ignorance? *ſilly women,* and ſuch *who never come to the knowledge of the truth.* 1.

Secondly, ignorance as it lets ſin in, ſo it locks it up, and the ſoul in it, ſuch a one lies in Satans inner dungeon, where no light of conviction comes, darkneſſe inclines to ſleep, a blinde minde and a drowſie conſcience go together. When the ſtorme aroſe, the mariners who were awake fell a praying to their God; but the ſleeper feares nothing. Ignorance layes the ſoul aſleep under the hatches of ſtupidity. God hath planted in the beaſt a natural feare of that which threatens hurt to it. Go to thruſt a beaſt into a pit, and it hangs back, nature ſhews its abhorrency. 2.

Man

Man being of a nobler nature, and ſubject to more dangers, God hath ſet a double guard on him, as a natural feare of danger, ſo a natural ſhame that covers the face at the doing of any unworthy action. Now an ignorant man hath ſlipt from both theſe his Keepers: he ſins and bluſheth not, becauſe he knows not his guilt: he wants that Magiſtrate within, which ſhould put him to ſhame; neither is he afraid, becauſe he knows not his danger; and therefore he playes with his ſin; as the childe with the waves, that by and by will ſwallow him up. Conſcience is Gods alarm to call the ſinner up; It doth not alwayes ring in his eare that hath knowledge, being uſually ſet by God to go off at ſome ſpecial houre; when God is ſpeaking in an Ordinance, or ſtriking in a Providence; but in an ignorant ſoul, this is ſilent. The Clock cannot go when the weights are taken off; Conſcience is only a witneſſe to what it knows.

3. Thirdly, ignorance ſhuts out the means of recovery. Friends and Miniſters, yea, Chriſt himſelf ſtands without, and cannot help the creature, as ſuch threatenings and promiſes, all of no uſe; he feares not the one, he deſires not the other, becauſe he knows neither: Heaven-way cannot be found in the dark, and therefore the firſt thing God doth, is to ſpring in with a light, and let the creature know where he is, and what the way is to get out of his priſon-houſe, without which all attempts to eſcape are in vain. There is ſome ſhimmering light in all, *Non dantur purè tenebræ*, I think, is good Divinity as well as Philoſophy: and this night-light may diſcover many ſins, produce inward prickings of conſcience for them, yea, ſtir up the creature to ſtep aſide, rather than drown in ſuch broad waters. There are ſome ſins ſo cruel and coſtly, that the moſt proſtrate ſoul may in time be weary of their ſervice for low ends: but what will all this come to, if the creature be not acquainted with Chriſt the true way to God, faith and repentance the only way to Chriſt? ſuch a one after all this buſle, in ſtead of making an eſcape from Satan, will run full into his mouth another way. There are ſome wayes, which at firſt ſeem right to the traveller; yet winde about ſo inſenſibly, that when a man hath gone far, and thinks himſelf near home, he is carried back to the place from whence he ſet forth. This will befall every ſoul ignorant of Chriſt, and the way of life through him; after may yeares travel,

travel, as they think, towards heaven by their good meanings, blinde devotions and reformation, when they ſhall expect to be within ſight of heaven, they ſhall finde themſelves even where they were at firſt, as very ſlaves to Satan as ever.

Uſe. 1. This ſpeaks to you that are Parents, ſee what need you have of inſtructing your children, and training them up betimes in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Till theſe chaines of darkneſſe be knockt off their minds, there is no poſſibility of getting them out of the devils priſon; he hath no ſuch tame ſlave as the ignorant ſoul: ſuch a one goes before Satan (as the ſilly ſheep before the butcher) and knowes not who he is, nor whither he carries him; and can you ſee the Devil driving your children to the ſhambles, and not labour to reſcue them out of his hands? Bloody parents you are, that can thus harden your bowels againſt your own fleſh. Now the more to provoke you to your duty, take theſe conſiderations.

1. Your relation obligeth you to take care of their precious ſouls. 'Tis the ſoul is the child rather than the body: and therefore in Scripture put for the whole man. *Abraham* and *Lot* went forth *with all the ſouls they had gotten in Haran*, Gen. 12. ſo *all the ſoules that came with* Jacob *into* Egypt, that is, all the perſons. The body is but the ſheath; and if one ſhould leave his ſword with you to be kept ſafely for him, would you throw away the blade, and onely preſerve the ſcabbard? And yet parents do commonly judge of their care and love to their children by their providing for the outward man, by their breeding, that teaching them how to live like men (as they ſay) when they are dead and gone, and comport themſelves to their civil pace and rank in the world, Theſe things indeed are commendable, but is not the moſt weighty buſineſſe of all forgotten in the meane time, while no endeavour is uſed that they may live as Chriſtians, and know how to carry themſelves in duty to God and man as ſuch? and can they do this without the knowledge of the holy rule they are to walk by? I am ſure *David* knew no means effectual without this, and therefore propounds the queſtion, *Wherewithal ſhall a young man cleanſe his way?* and he reſolves it in the next words, *By taking head thereto according to thy Word*, Pſal. 119.9. And how ſhall they

compare their way and the Word together, if not inſtructed? our children are not borne with Bibles in their heads or hearts. And who ought to be the inſtructer, if not the Parent? yea, who will do it with ſuch natural affection? As I have heard ſometimes a mother ſay in other reſpects, Who can take ſuch pains with my childe, and be ſo careful as my ſelfe that am its Mother? Bloody parents then they are who acquaint not their children with God or his Word; what do they but put them under a neceſſity of periſhing, if God ſtir not up ſome to ſhew more mercy than themſelves to them. Is it any wonder to hear that ſhip to be ſunk, or daſht upon the rock, which was put to ſea without card or compaſſe? no more is it, they ſhould ingulph themſelves in ſin and perdition, that are thruſt forth into the world (which is a ſea of temptation) without the knowledge of God or their duty to him. In the fear of God think of it parents: your children have ſouls, and theſe God ſet you to watch over; It will be a poor account at the laſt day, if you can only ſay, Lord, here are my children. I bred them compleat Gentlemen, left them rich and wealthy. The ruſt of that ſilver you left them will witneſſe your folly and ſin, that you would do ſo much for that which ruſts, and nothing for the enriching their mindes with the knowledge of God, which would have endured for ever; happy if you had left them leſſe money and more knowledge.

2. Conſider it hath ever been the Saints practice to inſtruct and teach their children the way of God, *David* we finde dropping inſtruction into his ſon *Solomon*, 1 Chron. 28. 9. *Know thou the God of thy Father, and ſerve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing minde.* Though a King, he did not put it off to his Chaplins, but whetted it on him with his own lips. Neither was his Queen *Bathſheba* forgetful of her duty, her gracious counſel is upon record, *Prov.* 31. and that ſhe may do it with the more ſerioufneſſe and ſolemnity, we finde her ſtirring up her motherly bowels, to let her ſon ſee, that ſhe fetcht her words deep, even from her heart. *What my ſonne! and what the ſonne of my womb! and what the ſonne of my vows?* Ver. 2. Indeed that counſel is moſt like to go to the heart, which comes from thence. Parents know not what impreſſion ſuch melting expreſſions of their love mingled with their inſtructions

leave

leave on their children. God bids; *draw forth our ſouls to the hungry*, that is more than draw our purſe, which may be done, and the heart hard and churliſh. Thus we ſhould draw forth our ſouls with our inſtructions. What need I tell of *Timothy*'s Mother and Grandmother who acquainted him with the Scripture from his youth? And truely I think, that man calls in queſtion his own Saintſhip, that takes no care to acquaint his childe with God, and the way that leads to him. I have known ſome, that though prophane themſelves, have been very ſolicitous, their children ſhould have good education; but never knew I a Saint that was regardleſſe whether his childe knew God or not.

3. It is an act of great unrighteouſneſſe not to inſtruct our children. We read of ſome *that hold the truth in unrighteouſneſſe*: among others thoſe Parents do it, that lock up the knowledge of theſe ſaving truths from their children, which God hath imparted to themſelves. There is a double unrighteouſneſſe in it.

Firſt, they are unrighteous to their children, who may lay as much claime to their care of inſtructing them, as to their labour and induſtry in laying up a temporal eſtate for them. If he ſhould do unrighteouſly with his childe, that ſhould not endeavour to provide for his outward maintenance, or having gathered an eſtate, ſhould lock it up, and deny his childe neceſſaries, then much more he that lives in ignorance of God, whereby he renders himſelf incapable of providing for his childes ſoul; but moſt of all, he that having gather'd a ſtock of knowledge, yet hides it from his childe.

Secondly, they are unrighteous to God.

Firſt, in that they keep that talent in their own hands which was given to be paid out to their children. When God reveal'd himſelfe to *Abraham*, he had reſpect to *Abraham*'s children, and therefore we finde God promiſing himſelf this at *Abraham*'s hands, upon which he imparts his minde to him concerning his purpoſe of deſtroying *Sodom*; *Shall I hide from Abraham* (ſaith God) *that thing which I do? I know that he will command his children, and his houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord*, Gen. 18. 17, 19. The Church began at firſt in a family, and was preſerv'd by the godly care of Parents in inſtructing their children and houſhold in the truths of God,

whereby the knowledge of God was transmitted from generation to generation; and though now the Church is not confined to such strait limits, yet every private family is as a little nursery to the Church; if the nursery be not carefully planted, the Orchard will soon decay. O could you be willing, Christians, that your children when you are laid in the dust, should be turn'd into the degenerate plant of a strange vine; and prove a generation that do not know God? Atheisme needs not be planted, you do enough to make your children such, if you do not endeavour to plant Religion in their mindes. The very neglect of the Gardner to sowe and dresse his garden, gives advantage enough to the weeds to come up. This is the difference between Religion and Atheisme, Religion doth not grow without planting, but will die even where it is planted without watering. Atheisme, irreligion, and profaneneſſe are weeds will grow without setting, but they will not die without plucking up, all care and means little enough to stub them up. And therefore you that are Parents, and do not teach your children, deal the more unrighteously with God, because you neglect the best season in their whole life for planting in them the knowledge of God, and plucking up the contrary weeds of Atheisme and irreligion. Young weeds come up with most ease, simple ignorance in youth becomes wilful ignorance, yea, impudence in age, you will not instruct them when young, and they will scorne their Ministers should when they are old.

2. Secondly, you deale unrighteously with God, that train not up your children in the knowledge of God, because your children, if you be Christian Parents are Gods children; they stand in a fœderal relation to him, which the children of others do not; and shall Gods children be nurtured with the Devils education? Ignorance is that which he blindes the minds of the children of disobedience withal. Shall Gods children have no better breeding? The children of a Jew God made account were borne to him; *Thy sons and daughters whom thou hast born to me*, Ezek.16. 20. God had by the Covenant which he made with that people, married them unto himself, and therefore as the wife bears her children to her husband, (they are his children) so God calls the children of the Jews his, and com-

complains of it as an horrible wickedneſſe in them, that they ſhould not bring them up as his: but offer them up to *Molech*, *They have ſlain my children*, (ſaith God) *v.* 21. And are not the children of a Chriſtian his children as well as the Jewes were? hath God recall'd or altered the firſt Covenant, and cut off the entaile; and dareſt thou ſlay not only thy children, but the Lords alſo? and is not ignorance that bloody knife that doth it? *My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge*, Hoſea 4. 6. Do you not tremble to offer them not to *Molech*, but the Devil, whom before you had given up to God, when you brought them to that ſolemn Ordinance of Baptiſme, and their deſired before God and man that they might become Covenant-ſervants to the Lord? and haſt thou bound them to him, and never teach them; either who their Lord and Maſter is, or what their duty is as his ſervants? of thy own mouth God will condemne thee.

Fourthly, conſider you who are Parents, that by not inſtructing your children, you entitle your ſelves to all the ſins they ſhall commit to their death. We may ſin by a proxy, and make anothers fact our own. *Thou haſt* (ſaith God by *Nathan* to *David* concerning *Uriah*,) *ſlaine him with the ſword of the children of Ammon*, 2 Sam. 12. 9. So thou mayeſt pierce Chriſt, and ſlay him over and over with the bloody ſword of thy wicked children. If thou beeſt not the more careful to train them up in the fear of God: There might be ſomething ſaid for that Heathen, who when the Scholar abuſed him, fell upon the Maſter and ſtruck him. Indeed 'tis poſſible he might be in the moſt fault. When the childe breaks the Sabbath, it is his ſin; but more the fathers, if he never taught him what the command of God was. And if the Parent be acceſſary to the ſin of the childe, it will be hard for him to eſcape a Partnerſhip, yea, a Precedency in the puniſhment. O what a ſad greeting will ſuch have of their children at the great day? will they not then accuſe you to be the murderers of their precious ſoules, and lay their blood at your door, curſing you to your face that taught them no better? But grant, that by the interpoſition of thy timely repentance, thou ſecureſt thy ſoule from the judgment of that day; yet God can ſcourge thee here for the neglect of thy duty to them. How oft do we ſee children become heavy croſ-

4.

ſes to ſuch Parents? It is juſt that they ſhould not know their duty to thee, who didſt not teach them their duty to God; or if thou ſhouldeſt not live ſo long to ſee this, yet ſure thou canſt not but go in ſorrow to thy grave, to leave children behind thee that are on their way to hell. Some think, that *Lots* lingring ſo long in *Sodom*, was his loathneſſe to leave his ſons in law behinde him, to periſh in the flames. No doubt (good man) it was very grievous to him, and this might make him ſtay pleading with them, till the Angel pull'd him away. And certainly nothing makes holy Parents more loath to be gone out of this Sodomitical world, than a deſire to ſee their children out of the reach of that fire, (before they go,) that God will rain upon the heads of ſinners. You know not how ſoon the meſſenger may come to pluck you hence; do your beſt while you are among them to win them home to God.

Uſe 2. To the Miniſters of the Goſpel. Let this ſtir up your bowels of compaſſion towards thoſe many ignorant ſoules in your reſpective Congregations, who know not the right hand from the left. This, this is the great deſtroyer of the Countrey, which Miniſters ſhould come forth againſt with all their care and ſtrength. More are ſwept to hell with this plague of ſpiritual darkneſſe than any other. Where the light of knowledge and conviction is, there commonly is a ſenſe and pain that accompanies the ſinner when he doth evil, which forceth ſome now and then to enquire for a Phyſician, and come in the diſtreſſe of their ſpirits to their Miniſter or others for counſel, but the ignorant ſoul feels no ſuch ſmart; if the Miniſter ſtay till he ſends for him to inſtruct him, he may ſooner hear the bell go for him, than any meſſenger come for him; you muſt ſeek them out, and not expect that they will come to you. Theſe are a ſort of people that are afraid more of their remedy, than their diſeaſe, and ſtudy more to hide their ignorance, than how they may have it cured, which ſhould make us pity them the more, becauſe they can pity themſelves ſo little. I confeſſe, it is no ſmall unhappineſſe to ſome of us, who have to do with a multitude, that we have neither time nor ſtrength to make our addreſſes to every particular perſon in our Congregations, and attend on them as their needs require, and yet cannot well ſatisfie our conſciences otherwiſe. But let us look to it, that though we cannot

cannot do to the height of what we would, we be not found wanting in what we may. Let not the difficulty of our Province make us like ſome, who when they ſee they have more work upon their hands than they can well diſpatch, grow ſick of it, and ſit down out of a lazy deſpondency, and do juſt nothing. He that hath a great houſe running to ruine, and but a ſmall purſe; 'tis better for him to repair now a little, and then a little than let all fall down, becauſe he cannot do it all at once. Many Miniſters may complain of their Predeceſſours, that they left them their people more out of repair than their houſes, and this makes the work great indeed. As the Jewes, who were to revive the ſtones out of the heaps of rubbiſh, before they could build the wall, yet it went up, becauſe *the people had a minde to work*, Nehem. 4. O if once our hearts were but fill'd with zeal for God, and compaſſion to our peoples ſouls, we would up and be doing, though we could but lay a brick a day, and God would be with us. May be you who finde a people rude and ſottiſhly ignorant, like ſtones in the quarry, and trees unfell'd, ſhall not bring the work to ſuch perfection in your dayes as you deſire; yet as *David* did for *Solomon*, thou mayeſt by thy pains in teaching and inſtructing them, prepare materials for another who ſhall rear the Temple. Its very ordinary for one Miniſter to enter into the labours of another; to reap thoſe by a work of Converſion, in whom a former Miniſter hath caſt the ſeed of knowledge and conviction: And when God comes to reckon with his Workmen, the Plough-man and Sower ſhall have his penny, as well as the Harveſt-man and Reaper. O its a bleſſed thing to be (as *Job* ſaith he was,) eyes to the blinde, much more to blinde ſouls; ſuch are the Miniſters. God himſelf calls *Paſtours after his own heart, that feed his people with knowledge and underſtanding*, Jer. 3. 15. But wo to thoſe that are acceſſary to their peoples ignorance. Now a Miniſter may be acceſſary to the ignorance of his people.

First, by his own ignorance, Knowledge is ſo fundamental to the work and calling of a Miniſter, that he cannot be one without it. *Becauſe thou haſt rejected knowledge, I will alſo reject thee, that thou ſhalt be no Prieſt to me: ſeeing thou haſt forgotten the Law of thy God, I will alſo forget thy children*, Hoſ. 4. 6. The want of knowledge in a Miniſter is ſuch a defect, I.

as cannot be ſupplied by any thing elſe; be he never ſo meek, patient, bountiful, unblameable, if he hath not skill to divide the Word aright, he is not cut out for a Miniſter. Every thing is good, as its good for the end it is appointed to; a knife, though it had a haft of diamonds, yet if it will not cut 'its no knife. A bell, if not ſound, is no bell. The great work of a Miniſter is to teach others, his lips are to preſerve knowledge, he ſhould be as converſant in the things of God, as others in their particular trades. Miniſters are called Lights; if the light then be darkneſſe, how great is the darkneſſe of that people like to be? I know theſe ſtars in Chriſts hands are not all of the ſame magnitude; there is a greater glory of gifts and graces ſhines in ſome than others; yet ſo much light is neceſſary to every Miniſter as was in the ſtar the wiſe men ſaw at Chriſts birth, to be able out of the Word to direct ſinners the ſafe and true way to Chriſt and ſalvation. O ſirs, it is a ſad way of getting a living by killing of men, as ſome unskilfull Phyſicians do; but much more to get a temporal livelihood by ruining ſouls, through our ignorance. He is a cruel man to the poor Paſſengers, who will undertake to be Pilot, when he never ſo much as learn't his Compaſſe.

2. Secondly, by his negligence. Its all one if the Nurſe hath no milk in her breaſts, or having, drawes it not forth to her childe. There is a wo to the *Idol-ſhepherd*, Zech. 11. ſuch as have mouthes, but ſpeak not; lips, but not to feed the people with knowledge. It ſhall be the peoples ſin, if they feed not when bread is before them, but wo to us if we give them not meat in due ſeaſon. O ſirs, what ſhall we ſay to our Lord that truſts us, if thoſe abilities which he hath given us as market-money to buy bread for our people, be found wrapt up in a napkin of ſloth? if that time wherein we ſhould have been teaching and inſtructing them, ſhall appear to be waſted in our pleaſures, or employed about our carnal profits. That ſervant ſhall have but a ſad welcome of his Maſter when he comes home, that ſhall be found out of the way with the Key, and the family ſtarving in the mean time for want of proviſion.

3. Thirdly, by his unedifying preaching, when he preacheth unſound doctrine, which doth not perfect the underſtanding, but corrupt it. Better he did leave them in ſimple ignorance, than colour

colour their mindes with a falſe die; or when that he preacheth is frothy and flaſhy, no more fit to feed their ſoules, than husks the Prodigals belly, which when they know they are little the wiſer for their ſoules good. Or when his diſcourſes are ſo high flown, that the poor people ſtand gazing, as thoſe who have loſt the ſight of their Preacher, and at the end of the Sermon cannot tell what he would have. Or thoſe who preach only truths, that are for the higher forme of Profeſſours, who have their ſenſes well exerciſed, excellent may be for the building up three or foure eminent Saints in the Congregation; but in the mean time, the weak ones in the family, (who ſhould indeed chiefly be thought on, becauſe leaſt able to guide themſelves, or carve for themſelves) theſe are forgotten. He ſure is an unwiſe builder, that makes a ſcaffold as high as *Pauls* ſteeple, when his work is at the bottome, and he is to lay the foundation, whereas the Scaffold ſhould riſe as the building goes up. So *Paul* advanceth in his doctrine, as his hearers do in knowledge; *Hebr.* 6. 1. *Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Chriſt, let us go on unto perfection. Let us.* It is well indeed when the people can keep pace with the Preacher, To preach truths and notions above the hearers capacity, is like a Nurſe, that ſhould go to feed the childe with a ſpoon too big to go into its mouth. We may by ſuch preaching pleaſe our ſelves, and ſome of higher attainments, but what ſhall poor ignorant ones do in the mean time. He is the faithful ſteward that conſiders both. The Preacher is (as *Paul* ſaith of himſelf) *a debter both to the Greek and to the Barbarian, to the wiſe and to the unwiſe*, Rom. 1. 14. to prepare truths ſuitable to the degree of his hearers. Let the wiſe have their portion, but let them be patient to ſee the weaker in the family ſerved alſo.

Fourthly, a Miniſter may be acceſſary to the ignorance of his people, when through the ſcandal of his life he prejudiceth his doctrine, as a Cook, who by his naſtineſſe makes others afraid to eat what comes out of his foul fingers; Or when through his ſupercilious carriage, his poor people dare not come to him. He that will do any good in the Miniſters calling, muſt be as careful as the Fiſher, that he doth nothing to ſcare ſoules away from him, but all to allure and invite, that they may be toll'd within the compaſſe of his net. 4.

Uſe 3. Is the ignorant ſoul ſuch a ſlave to Satan? Let this ſtirre you up that are ignorant from your ſeats of ſloth, whereon like the blinde Egyptians you ſit in darkneſſe, ſpeedily come out of this darkneſſe, or reſolve to go down to utter darkneſſe. The covering of *Hamans* face did tell him, that he ſhould not ſtay in the Kings preſence. If thou liveſt in ignorance, it ſhews thou art in Gods black bill; he puts this cover before their eyes in wrath, whom he means to turne off into hell, 2 *Cor.* 4. *If our Goſpel be hid, it is to thoſe that periſh.* In one place ſinners are threatened, Job 36. *they ſhall dye without knowledge*; in another place, *they ſhall dye in their ſinnes*, John 8. He indeed that dies without knowledge, dies in his ſinnes: and what more fearful doome can the great God paſſe upon a creature than this? better dye in a priſon, dye in a ditch, than dye in ones ſinnes. If thou dye in thy ſinnes, thou ſhalt riſe in thy ſinnes: as thou falleſt aſleep in the duſt, ſo thou awakeſt in the morning of the reſurrection; if an ignorant Chriſtleſſe wretch, as ſuch thou ſhalt be arraigned and judged. That God whom now ſinners bid depart from them, will then be worth their acquaintance (themſelves being Judges;) but alas! then he will throw their own words in their teeth, and bid them depart from him, he deſires not the knowledge of them. O ſinners, you ſhall ſee at laſt, God can better be without your company in heaven, than you could without his knowledge on earth: Yet, yet 'tis day, draw your curtains, and behold Chriſt ſhining upon your face with Goſpel-light; hear wiſdome crying in the ſtreets, and Chriſt piping under your window in the voyce of his Spirit and Meſſengers, *How long will ye ſimple ones love ſimplicity, and fools hate knowledge? Turne you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, and make known my words unto you.* Prov. 1. 22, 23. What can you ſay (ſinners) for your ſottiſh ignorance? Where is your cloak for this ſinne? the time hath been when the Word of the Lord was precious, and there was no open viſion, not a Bible to be found in town or Countrey; when the tree of knowledge was forbidden fruit, and none might taſte thereof without licence from the Pope; happy he that could get a leaf or two of the Teſtament into a corner, afraid to tell the wife of his boſome. O how ſweet were theſe waters, when they were forced to ſteal them? but you have the Word, or may in your houſes; you have thoſe that open them every Sabbath:

bath in their Aſſemblies, many of you at leaſt have the offers of your Miniſters to take any paines with you in private, paſſionately beſeeching you to pity your ſouls, and receive inſtruction: yea, 'tis the lamentation they generally take up, you will not come unto them that you may receive light. How long may a poor Miniſter ſit in his ſtudy, before any of the ignorant ſort will come upon ſuch an errand? Lawyers have their Clients, and Phyſicians their Patients: theſe are ſought after, and call'd up at midnight for counſel: but alas! the ſoul, which is more worth than raiment and body too, that is neglected, and the Miniſter ſeldom thought on, till both theſe be ſent away. Perhaps when the Phyſician gives them over for dead, then we muſt come and cloſe up thoſe eyes with comfort, which were never opened to ſee Chriſt in his truth, or be counted cruel, becauſe he will not ſprinkle them with this holy water, and anoint them for the Kingdome of Heaven, though they know not a ſtep of the way which leads to it. Ah, poor wretches! what comfort would you have us ſpeak to thoſe, to whom God himſelfe ſpeaks terrour? Is heaven ours to give to whom we pleaſe? or is it in our power to alter the lawes of the moſt High, and ſave thoſe whom he condemns? Do you not remember the curſe that is to fall upon his head, *that maketh the blinde to wander out of the way? Deut.* 27. 18. what curſe then would be our portion, if we ſhould confirm ſuch blinde ſouls, that are quite out of the way to heaven, encouraging you to go on and expect to reach heaven at laſt, when God knows your feet ſtand in thoſe paths that lead to eternal death? No, 'tis written, we cannot, and God will not reverſe it; you may reade your very names among thoſe damned ſouls which Chriſt comes in flaming fire to take vengeance on, who the Apoſtle tells us are ſuch, *that know not God, and obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Theſ. 1. 8. And therefore in the feare of God, let this provoke you, of what age or ſexe, rank or condition ſoever in the world, to labour for the ſaving knowledge of God in Chriſt, *whom to know is life eternal. Are you young?* Enquire after God betimes, while your parts are freſh, and memory ſtrong, before the throng of worldly cares divert you, or luſts of youth debauch you. The feet of thoſe luſts which have buried millions of others in perdition, ſtand ready to carry you the ſame

way, if preventing grace come not and deliver you out of their hands, by ſeaſoning your mindes with the knowledge of God. This morning draught may prevent thy being infected with the ill ſavours thou mayeſt receive from the corrupt examples of others. Nay, how long thy ſtay may be in the world thou knoweſt not, ſee whether thou canſt not finde graves of thy length in the burial place; and if thou ſhouldeſt dye ignorant of God and his Law, what would then become of thee? The ſmall bruſh and the old logs, young ſinners, and thoſe that are withered with age meet and burn together. Or if thou ſhouldeſt ſtay a while longer here, may be becauſe thou wilt not learn now, God will not teach thee then: Or if thou ſhouldeſt in thy old age get acquaintance with God, yet 'tis ſad to be ſowing thy ſeed, when thou ſhouldeſt be reaping thy ſheaves, learning to know God, when thou mighteſt be comforting thy ſelf from the old acquaintance thou haſt enjoyed with him. *Are you old and ignorant?* Alas, poor creatures! your life in the ſocket, and this candle of the Lord not ſet up and lighted in your underſtanding? your body bowing to the duſt, and nature tolling the paſſing bell, as it were, and you (like one going into the dark) know not whither death will lead you or leave you. 'Tis like the infirmities of age, make you wiſh your bones were even laid at reſt in the grave: but if you ſhould dye in this condition, your poor ſouls would even wiſh they were here again with their old burdens on their back; aches and diſeaſes of old age are grievous, but damned ſouls would thank God, if he would bleſſe them with ſuch a heaven, as to lie in theſe paines to eſcape the torments of the other: O bethink you before you go hence; the leſſe time you have, the more diligence you muſt uſe to gain knowledge; we need not be earneſt, (one would think) to bid the poor priſoner learn his book, that cannot read, when he knows he ſhall be hang'd if he read not his neck-verſe. 'Tis not indeed the bare knowing the truths of the Goſpel, ſaves; but the groſſe ignorance of them to be ſure will damn ſouls. *Are you poor?* It is not your poverty is your ſin or miſery, but your ignorance where the true treaſure lies. Were you Gods poor, rich in knowledge and faith, you were happy, *Eccleſ.* 4. 13. *Better is a poor and wiſe childe, than a foolish King, who will no more be admoniſht*; yea, ſo happy, that did the Princes of the world,

world underſtand themſelves aright, they would wiſh themſelves in your clothes, how ragged ſoever they are, rather than be in their own robes; there are better making for you in heaven which you ſhall put on, when theirs ſhall be pull'd off to their ſhame: It will not then trouble you that you were, while in the world, poor; but it will torment them that they were ſo rich and great, and ſo poor to God and beggarly in their ſouls.

Are you rich? Labour for the knowledge of the moſt High. *Solomon* had more of the worlds treaſure than a thouſand of you have, and yet we finde him hard at prayer, tugging with God for knowledge, 1 *Chron.* 1.10. All theſe outward enjoyments are but *vaginæ bonorum*, as afflictions are *vaginæ malorum*. I am afraid many men think themſelves priviledged by their worldly greatneſſe from this duty, as if God were bound to ſave them, becauſe rich. Alas, Sirs, there are not ſo many of you like to come there. I muſt confeſſe, it would make one tremble to think what a ſmall number thoſe among the great ones that ſhall be ſaved, are ſummed up into: *Not many great, not many rich*; Why ſo few ſaved? Becauſe ſo few have ſaving knowledge. O the Atheiſme, the ignorance, the ſottiſh barbariſme that is to be found even in thoſe that the world applaud, and even worſhip becauſe of their lands and eſtates, who yet are not able to give any account of their faith? A poor leather-coat Chriſtian will ſhame and catechize a hundred of them. If heaven were to be purchaſed with houſe and lands, then theſe would carry it away from the poor Diſciples of Jeſus Chriſt, they have their hundreds and thouſands lye by them for a purchaſe alwayes, but this money is not currant in heavens Exchange. *This is life eternal, to know thee, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent.*

Queſt. But how may an ignorant ſoul attain to knowledge?

Anſw. Firſt, Be deeply affected with the ignorance. Some are blind, as *Laodicea*, and know it not, *Rev.* 3.17. As ignorance blinds the minde, ſo pride is a blinde before their ignorance, that they know it not. Theſe have ſuch a high opinion of themſelves, that they take it ill any ſhould ſuſpect them as ſuch; theſe of all men are moſt out of the way to knowledge, they are too good to learn of man as they think, and too bad to be taught of God. The gate into Chriſts School is low, and theſe cannot ſtoop: The Maſter himſelf is ſo humble and lowly, that he will not

teach a proud Scholar. Therefore first become a foole in thy own eye. A wiser man than thy selfe hath confessed as much, *Prov.* 30. 2, 3. *I am more bruitish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man, I neither learned wisdome, nor have the knowledge of the Holy.* When thou art come to thy self to own and blush at the bruitish ignorance of thy minde, thou art fit to be admitted into Christs School. *If they be ashamed, then shew them the patterne of the house*, Ezek. 43. 10.

2. Secondly, be faithful with that little knowledge thou hast. Art thou convinced this is a sinne, and that is a dutie? Follow the light close, you know not what this little may grow to; We use to set up our children with a little stock at first, and as they use it, so we adde. The Kingdome of God comes of small beginnings. God complains of *Israel*, they were *brutish in their knowledge*, Jer. 10. 14. he doth not say brutish in their ignorance, had they sinned because they did not know better, this would have excused *à tanto*, but they did that which was brutish and unreasonable, as their worshipping graven images notwithstanding they knew to the contrary. That man shall not excel in knowledge who prostitutes it to sinne; *Job* 36. 12. *If they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and shall dye without knowledge.* A candle pent up close in a dark lanthorn, swailes out a pace: and so doth light shut up in the conscience, and not suffered to come forth in the conversation. Those Heathens that are charged for *holding the truth in unrighteousnesse*, Rom. 1. 18. the next news you hear of them is, that *they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkned*, ver. 21.

3. Thirdly, ply the throne of grace. *Bene orasse est bene studuisse*; he is the best student in divinity, that studies most upon his knees. Knowledge is a divine gift, all light is from heaven. God is the Father of light, and prayer puts the soul under the pupillage of God. *If any one lack wisdome, let him ask it of God.* This is more than naked knowledge, wisdome how to use it. Study may make one a great Scholar in the Scriptures, but prayer makes a wise Christian, as it obtains sanctified knowledge, without which it is no perfect gift, but δῶρον ἄδωρον, a gift and no gift. Pray then with an humble boldnesse, God gives it to all that ask, and that ἁπλῶς, candidly, liberally;

liberally; not like proud man who will rather put one to ſhame who is weak for his ignorance, than take the pains to teach him. Thy petition is very pleaſing to God. Remember how *Solomon* ſped upon the like occaſion, and promiſe thy ſelfe the ſame ſucceſſe. Chriſts School is a free School; he denies none that come to him, ſo they will ſubmit to the orders of the School; and though all have not an anſwer in the ſame degree of knowledge (it is not needful that all ſhould be *Solomons* in knowledge, except all were to be *Solomons* in place) yet the meaneſt diſciple that Chriſt ſends forth ſhall be furniſhed with ſaving knowledge, enough to fit him for his admittance into heavens Academy. *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel, and after bring me to glory.*

Fourthly, thou muſt beſtow ſome time for thy diligent ſearch after truth. Truth lies deep, and muſt be digged for. Since man was turned out of Paradiſe he can do nothing without labour, except ſinne (this follows his hand indeed) but this treaſure of knowledge calls for Spade and Mattock. We are bid *ſearch the Scripture*, and *Dan.* 12. 4. *Many ſhall runne to and fro, and knowledge ſhall be encreaſed*; a Metaphor from Merchants, who beſtirre themſelves to get an eſtate, runne to and fro, firſt in one land, then in another, where-ever they hear of any thing to be got, thither they poſt, though to the ends of the earth: Thus muſt the ſoul runne from one duty to another, one while read, and anon meditate of what he hath read, then pray over his meditations, and ask counſel after all. What is the meaning of this, and how underſtand you that? *Non ſchola Epicuri fecit magnos viros ſed contubernium.* There is more light got ſometimes by a ſhort conference with the Preacher, than by his whole Sermon. Be ſure thou compaſſe all the means for knowledge within the walk of thy endeavour. In this thy ſearch for knowledge obſerve three things. 4.

Firſt, the end thou propoſeſt that it be pure and holy, not meerly to know, as ſome do, who labour for knowledge, as many for eſtates, and when they have got it look on their notions, as they on their bags of money, but have not a heart to uſe their knowledge for their own or others good; this is a ſore evil. Speculative knowledge like *Rachel* is faire, but barren. Not to be known and admired by others for thy ſtature in know- 1.

ledge

ledge above thy Brethren, verily it is too baſe an end to aime at in ſeeking knowledge, eſpecially ſuch as is the knowledge of God and Chriſt. To ſee a Heathen ſtudy for knowledge in Philoſophy, and then carry all his labour to this market, and think himſelf rewarded with obtaining the name for a wiſe man, is though baſe, yet more tolerable: but for one that knows God, and what it is to enjoy him, for ſuch a one to content himſelfe with a blaſt or two of ſorry mans vain breath, this is folly with a witneſſe, look thou flieſt higher in the end than ſo. Labour for knowledge that thou mayeſt fear God whom thou knoweſt, thus *David*, Pſal. 119. 33. *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy ſtatutes, and I ſhall keep it unto the end.* The Word of God is called a light unto our feet, not to our tongues meerly to talk of, but feet to walk by; Endeavour for it, not that thou may'ſt ſpread thy own name, but celebrate God. As *David* promiſeth, when he underſtands the precepts of God, then he will talk of his wondrous works, he will trumpet the fame of them, and thereby awaken others to enquire after God.

2. Secondly, when thy end is right ſet, then thou muſt be conſtant in thy endeavour after it. The myſteries of Chriſt are not learnt in a day. *Then ſhall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord*, Hoſ. 6. 3. Some are in a good mood (may be) and they will look into the Bible, and read a Chapter or two, and away they go for a week, and never practiſe it more; like ſome boyes if at School one day, truant all the week after: is it any wonder ſuch thrive not in knowledge? It is a good ſpeech of *Bernard*, *Tantum diſtat ſtudium à lectione, quantum amicitia ab hoſpitio, ſocialis affectio à fortuitâ ſalutatione.* The ſtudy of the Word, and the reading of it differs as much, as the friendſhip of ſuch who every day converſe lovingly together, doth from the acquaintance one hath with a ſtranger at an Inne, or whom he ſalutes as he paſſeth by in the ſtreet. If you will get knowledge indeed, you muſt not onely ſalute the Word now and then, but walk with it, and enter into daily converſe with it. The three men (who were indeed Angels) that ſtood by *Abraham*, as he ſate at his Tent-door, were reſerved, and ſtrange, till *Abraham* invited them into his Tent, and entertain'd them friendly; and then Chriſt who was one among them (as appears by the Name *Jehovah* given him in ſeveral verſes, and alſo by what

what he promiſed he would do for *Sarah*, ver. 10. not what God would do, which if a created Angel he would) begins to diſcover himſelf to *Abraham*, and reveale his ſecrets to him. That ſoul above others ſhall be acquainted with the ſecrets of God in his Word, that doth not ſlightly reade the Word, and as it were complement with it, at his tent-doore, but deſires more intimacy with it, and therefore entertaines it within his ſoul by frequent meditating of it. *David* compares the Word for ſweetneſſe to *the honey and the honey-combe*. Indeed it is ſo full, that at firſt reading ſome ſweetneſſe will now and then drop from it, but he that doth not preſſe it by meditation, leaves the moſt behinde.

Thirdly, Be ſure thou takeſt the right order and method. Arts and Sciences have their rudiments, and alſo their more abſtruſe and deep notions; and ſure the right end to beginne at, is firſt to learn the principles: he (we ſay) is not like to make a good Scholar in the Univerſity, that never was good Grammar-Scholar. And they cannot be ſolid Chriſtians, that are not inſtructed in the grounds of Chriſtianity. The want of this is the cauſe why many are ſo unſtedfaſt. Firſt, of this way and then of that, blown like glaſſes into any ſhape, as falſe Teachers pleaſe to breath. Alas, they have no center to draw their lines from; think it no diſgrace you who have runne into errour, and loſt your ſelves in the labyrinths of deep points (which now are the great diſcourſe of the weakeſt profeſſors) to be ſet back to learn the firſt principles of the Oracles of God better; too many are as *Tertullian* ſaith in another caſe, *pudoris magis memores quàm ſalutis*, more tender of their reputation, than their ſalvation, who are more aſhamed to be thought ignorant, than careful to have it cured. 3.

Fifthly, If thou wouldſt attain to divine knowledge, wait on the Miniſtry of the Word. As for thoſe who neglect this, and come not where the Word is Preacht, they do like one that ſhould turne his back on the Sunne that he may ſee it; if thou wouldſt know God, come where he hath appointed thee to learn. Indeed, where the means is not, God hath extraordinary wayes, as a Father if no School in Town, will teach his childe at home, but if there be a publick School, thither he ſends him: *God maketh manifeſt* (ſaith *Paul*) *the ſavour of his knowledge by* 5.

us in every place, 2 Cor. 2. 14. Let men talk of the Spirit what they pleaſe. He will at laſt be found a quencher of the Spirit, that is, a deſpiſer of Prophecy; they both ſtand cloſe together, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 19, 20. *Quench not the Spirit*, *Deſpiſe not Propheſying*. But it is not enough to ſit under the meanes; Woful experience teacheth us this, there are ſome no Sun will tan, they keep their old complexion under the moſt ſhining and burning light of the Word preached, as ignorant and prophane as thoſe that never ſaw Goſpel-day; and therefore if thou wilt receive any ſpiritual advantage by the Word, take heed how thou heareſt.

Firſt, Look thou beeſt a wakeful hearer. Is it any wonder he ſhould go away from the Sermon no wiſer than he came, that ſleeps the greateſt part of it away, or heares betwixt ſleeping and waking? It muſt be in a dream ſure, if God reveales any thing of his mind to him. So indeed God did to the Fathers of old, but it was not as they prophanely ſlept under an Ordinance. O take heed of ſuch irreverence. He that compoſeth himſelfe to ſleep (as ſome do) at ſuch a time, or he that is not humbled for it, and that deeply; both of them betray a baſe and low eſteeme they have of the Ordinance. Surely thou thinkeſt but meanly of what is delivered, if it will not keep thee awake, yea, of God himſelfe, whoſe meſſage it is. See how thou art reproved by the awful carriage of a Heathen, and that a King. *Ehud* did but ſay to *Eglon*, *I have a meſſage from God unto thee*, And *he aroſe out of his ſeate*, *Judge* 3. 20. And thou clapeſt down on thy ſeat to ſleep? O how dareſt thou put ſuch an affront upon the great God? How oft did you fall aſleep at dinner, or telling your money? And is not the Word of God worth more than theſe? I ſhould wonder if ſuch Sermon-ſleepers do dream of any thing but hell-fire. 'Tis dangerous you know to fall aſleep with a candle burning by our ſide; ſome have been ſo burnt in their beds; but more dangerous to ſleep while the candle of the Word is ſhining ſo near us. What if you ſhould ſink down dead like *Eutychus*? here is no *Paul* to raiſe you as he had; and that you ſhall not, where is your ſecurity?

Secondly, Thou muſt be an attentive hearer. He that is awake, but wanders with his eye or heart, what doth he but ſleep with his eyes open? It were as good the ſervants ſhould be aſleep in his bed, as when up, not to minde his Maſters buſineſſe.

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When God intends a ſoul good by the Word, he drawes ſuch a one to liſten and hearken heedfully to what is delivered; as we ſee in *Lydia*, *who* ('tis ſaid) *attended unto the things which were ſpoken of* Paul. And thoſe, *Luke* 19. 48. *The people were attentive to heare him.* They did hang on him as you ſhall ſee Bees on ſome ſweet flower, or as young birds on the bills of their dammes as they feed them; that is, the ſoul which ſhall get light and life by the Word. *Heare ye children, and attend to know underſtanding*, *Prov.* 4. 1. Labour therefore in hearing the Word to fixe thy quickſilver-minde, and ſet thy ſelfe to heare, as 'tis ſaid *Jehoſaphat* did to pray; and that thou mayeſt, before thou goeſt, get thy heart into ſome deep ſenſe of thy ſpiritual wants, eſpecially of thy ignorance of the things of God, and thy deplored condition by reaſon of it; till the heart be toucht, the minde will not be fixt. Therefore you may obſerve, 'tis ſaid, *God open'd the heart of* Lydia, *that ſhe attended*, *Acts* 16. 14. The Minde goes of the Wills errand; we ſpend our thoughts upon what our hearts propoſe. If the heart hath no ſenſe of its ignorance, or no deſires after God, no wonder ſuch a one liſtens not what the Preacher ſaith; his heart ſends his minde another way. *They ſit before thee as my people* (ſaith God) *but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſſe*; They do not come out of ſuch an intent or deſire to heare for any good to their ſouls, then they would apply themſelves wholly to the work; no, it is their covetouſneſſe hath their hearts; and therefore as ſome idle ſervant, when he hath waited on his Maſter; brought him to his pew, then he goes out to his good fellowes at the Alehouſe, and comes no more till Sermon be almoſt done: ſo do the thoughts of moſt when they go to the Ordinance, they ſlip out in the ſtreet, market or ſhop, you may finde them any where but about the duty before them, and all becauſe theſe have their hearts more than God and his Word.

Thirdly, Thou muſt be a retentive hearer, without this the work will ever be to begin again. Truths to a forgetful hearer are as a ſeale ſet on water, the impreſſion laſts no longer than the ſeale is on; the Sermon once done, and all is undone; be therefore very careful to faſten what thou heareſt on thy memory; which that thou mayeſt do,

Firſt, receive the truth in the love of it. An affectionate

hearer will not be a forgetful hearer. Love helps the memory; *Can a woman forget her childe*, or *a maide her ornaments, or a bride her attire?* No, they love them too well: Were the truths of God thus precious to thee, thou wouldeſt with *David*, think of them day and night. Even when the Chriſtian through weakneſſe of memory cannot remember the very words he hears, to repeat them; yea, then he keeps the power and favour of them in his ſpirit; as when ſugar is diſſolved in wine, you cannot ſee it, but you may taſte it; when meat is eaten and digeſted, it is not to be found as it was received, but the man is cheared and ſtrengthened by it, more able to walk and work than before, by which you may know it is not loſt: ſo you may taſte the truths the Chriſtian heard in his ſpirit, ſee them in his life. Perhaps if you ask him what the particulars were, the Miniſter had about faith, mortification, repentance, and the like, he cannot tell you; yet this you may finde, his heart is more broken for ſin, more enabled to rely on the promiſes, and now weaned from the world. As that good woman anſwered one, that coming from Sermon, ask't her what ſhe remembred of the Sermon? ſaid, ſhe could not at preſent recal much, but ſhe heard that which ſhould make her reforme ſome things as ſoon as ſhe came home.

2. Secondly, meditate on what thou heareſt; by this *David* got more wiſdome than his teachers. Obſerve what truth, what Scripture is cleared to thee in the Sermon more than before, take ſome time in ſecret to converſe with it, and make it thereby familiar to thy underſtanding. Meditation to the Sermon, is what the harrow is to the ſeed, it covers thoſe truths, which elſe might have been pickt or waſht away. I am afraid there are many proofs turned down at a Sermon, that are hardly turned up, and lookt on any more, when the Sermon is done; and if ſo, you make others believe you are great traders for your ſouls, than you are indeed; as if one ſhould come to a ſhop and lay by a great deal of rich ware, and when he hath done, goes away, and never calls for it. O take heed of ſuch doings. The hypocrite cheats himſelf worſt at laſt.

3. Thirdly, diſcharge thy memory of what is ſinful. We wipe our table-book, and deface what is there ſcribled, before we can write new. There is ſuch a contrariety betwixt the truths

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of God and all that is frothy and sinful, that one puts out the others if you would retain the one, you must let the other go.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Spirituality of the devils nature, and their extreme wickedness.

Against spiritual wickedness.

THese words are the fourth Branch in the Description, *Spiritual wickednesses*, and our contest or combat with them as such expresst by the adversative particle [*Against*] in the Greek, πρὸς τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας· word for word; *Against the Spirituals of wickedness*, which is, say some, *against wicked spirits*; that is, true, but not all. I conceive with many interpreters, not only the spiritual nature of the devil, and the wickedness thereof to be intended, but also, yea, chiefly the nature and kind of those sins, which these wicked spirits do most usually and vigorously provoke the Saints unto, and they are the spirituals of wickedness, not those grosse fleshly sinnes, which the herd of beastly sinners like swine wallow in; but sinne spirituallized, and this, because it is not πνεύματα, but πνευματικὰ, not spirits, but spirituals. The words present us with these three doctrinal Conclusions.

First, the devils are spirits. 1.

Secondly, the devils are spirits extremely wicked. 2.

Thirdly, these wicked spirits do chiefly annoy the Saints with, and provoke them to spiritual wickednesses. 3.
First, of the first.

SECT. 1.

First, they are spirits. Spirit is a word of various acception in Scripture. Amongst other used often to set forth the essence and nature of Angels good and evil, both which are called spi- 1.

rits. The Holy Angels, *Heb.* 1. 14. *Are they not all miniſtring ſpirits?* The evil: *There came forth a ſpirit and ſtood before the Lord, and ſaid, I will perſwade him*, 1 Kings 22. 21. that ſpirit was a devil. How oft is the devil call'd the unclean ſpirit, foule ſpirit, lying ſpirit, &c. Sin did not alter their ſubſtance, for then, as one ſaith well, that nature and ſubſtance which tranſgreſt could not be puniſh't.

1. Firſt, the devil is a ſpirit, that is, his eſſence is immaterial and ſimple, not compounded (as corporal beings are) of matter and forme: *Handle and ſee me* (ſaith Chriſt to his diſciples, that thought they had ſeen a ſpirit) *a ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones, as ye ſee me have*, Luk. 24. 39. If they were not thus immaterial, how could they enter into bodyes and poſſeſſe them, as the Scripture tells us they have, even a legion into one man? *Luke* 8.30. one body cannot thus enter into another.

2. Secondly, the devils are ſpiritual ſubſtances, not qualities, or evil motions, ariſing from us, as ſome have abſurdly conceived. So the Sadduces, and others following them deny any ſuch being, as Angel good or evil; but this is ſo fond a conceit, that we muſt both forfeit our reaſon, and deny the Scriptures to maintain it, where we finde their creation related, *Col.* 1. 18. the fall of ſome from their firſt eſtate, *Jude* 6. and the ſtanding of others called the Elect Angels; The happineſſe of the one, who behold Gods face; and their employment, are ſent out to attend on the Saints as ſervants on their Maſters heirs, *Heb.* 1. The miſery of the other, reſerved in chaines of darkneſſe unto the judgement of the great day; and their preſent work, which is to do miſchief to the ſouls and bodies of men, as far as they are permitted; all which ſhew their ſubſiſtence plain enough. But ſo immerſt is ſorry man in fleſh, that he will not eaſily beleeve what he ſees not with his fleſhly eyes; upon the ſame account we may deny the being of God himſelf, becauſe inviſible.

3. Thirdly, they are entire ſpiritual ſubſtances, which have every one proper exiſtence: and thus they are diſtinguiſh't from the ſouls of men, which are made to ſubſiſt in a humane body; and together with it to make one perfect man: ſo that the ſoul, though when ſeparated from the body, it doth exiſt, yet hath a tendency to union with its body again.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, they are, though entire ſpiritual ſubſtances, yet finite, being but creatures. God only is the uncreated, infinite, and abſolutely ſimple *Spirit*, yea Father of all other ſpirits. 4.

Now from this ſpiritual nature of the devil, we may further ſee what a dreadful enemy we have to grapple with.

Firſt, as ſpirits they are of vaſt intellectual abilities. Sorry man, while in this dark priſon of the body, hath not light enough to know what Angelical perfections are; that they excel in knowledge all other creatures we know, becauſe as Spirits they come neareſt by Creation to the Nature of God that made them; the heavens are not lift higher from the earth, than Angels by knowledge from man, while on earth. Man by Art hath learn't to take the height of the ſtars of heaven, but where is he that can tell how far in knowledge Angels exceed man? 'Tis true, they have loſt much of that knowledge they had, even all their knowledge as holy Angels, what now they know of God hath loſt its ſavour, and they have no power to uſe it for their own good. What *Jude* ſaith of wicked men, may be ſaid of them; *What they know naturally in theſe things they corrupt themſelves.* They know the holineſſe of God, but love him not for it, as the Elect Angels do, and themſelves by Creation did. They know the evil of ſin, and love it not the leſſe; but though they are ſuch fooles for themſelves, yet have ſubtilty too much for all the Saints on earth, if we had not a God to play our game for us. 1.

Secondly, as Spirits they are inviſible, and their reproaches alſo. They come and you ſee not your enemy. Indeed this makes him ſo little feared by the ignorant world, whereas it is his greateſt advantage if rightly weighed. O if men have an apparition of the devil, or heare a noiſe in the night, they cry, The devil, the devil, and are ready to run out of their wits for feare; but they carry him in their hearts, and walk all the day long in his company, and feare him not. When thy proud heart is clambering up to the pinacle of honour in thy ambitious thoughts, who ſets thee there but the devil? When thy adulterous heart is big with all manner of uncleanneſſe and filthineſſe, who but Satan hath been there, begetting theſe brats on thy whoriſh ſpirit? When thou art raging in thy paſſion, 2.

throwing

throwing burning coales of wrath and fury about with thy inflamed tongue, where was it ſet on fire but of hell? When thou art hurried like the ſwine into the precipice, and even choakt with thy own drunken vomit, who but the devil rides thee?

3. Thirdly, as ſpirits they are immortal. Of other enemies you may hear news at laſt that they are dead which ſought thy life, as the Angel told *Joſeph* of *Herod*. Perſecuting men walk a turne or two upon the ſtage, and are call'd off by death, and there is an end of all their plots; but devils die not, they will hunt thee to thy grave, and when thou dieſt they will meet thee in another world, to accuſe and torment thee there alſo.

4. Fourthly, they are unwearied in their motions. When the fight is over among men; the Conquerour muſt ſit down and breathe, and ſo loſeth the chaſe, becauſe not able to purſue it in time. Yea, ſome have given over their Empires, as glutted with the blood of men, and weary of the work, when they cannot have their will as they deſired: Thus *Dioclesian*, becauſe he ſaw he did but mowe a meadow, that grew the thicker for the cutting down (as *Tertullian* ſpeaks of the Chriſtians martyred) he throws away his Scepter in a Pet. *Charles* the fifth did the like (ſome ſay) upon the ſame reaſon, becauſe he could not root out the Lutherans. But the devils ſpirit is never cowed, nor he weary of doing miſchief, though he hath never ſtood ſtill ſince firſt he began his walk to and fro the world. O what would become of us if a God were not at our back, who is infinitely more the devils odds then he ours.

SECT. 2.

2. Secondly, they are wicked ſpirits; wicked in the abſtract, as in the Text, and call'd by way of eminency in ſin, *The wicked one*, Mat. 13. 19. As God is called the holy one, becauſe *none holy as the Lord*. So, the devil the wicked one, becauſe he is a none ſuch in ſinne. In a few particulars let us endeavour to take the height of the devils ſinne, and the rather that we may judge of the degrees of ſins, and ſinners among the ſons of men, the

neerer

neerer God in holineſſe, the more holy; the liker the devil, the more wicked.

1. Firſt, theſe Apoſtate Angels are the inventers of ſinne; the firſt that founded the Trumpet of rebellion againſt their Maker, and led the dance to all that ſinne which ſince hath filled the world. Now what tongue can accent this ſinne to its full? for ſuch a noble creature whom God hath ſet on the top as it were of all the Creation neareſt to himſelf, from whom God had kept nothing but his own Royal Diadem, for this Peer and Favourite of the Court without any cauſe or ſolicitation from any other, to make this bold and blaſphemous attempt to ſnatch at Gods own Crown, this paints the devil blacker than the thoughts of men and Angels can conceive. He is called *the father of lies*, as thoſe who found out any Art, are called the father of it. *Jubal the father of all ſuch as handle the harp, and organ*; he invented Muſick; and this is a dreadful aggravation, becauſe they ſinned without a Tempter. And though man is not in ſuch a degree capable of this aggravation, yet ſome men ſinne after the very ſimilitude of the devils tranſgreſſion in this reſpect, who as Saint *Paul*, Rom. 1. 30. ſtiles them, *are inventers of evil things*. Indeed ſinne is an old trade, found out to our hand; but as in other trades and arts, ſome famous men ariſe, who adde to the inventions of others, and make trades and arts (as it were) new; ſo there ever are ſome infamous in their generation, that make old ſinnes new by ſuperadding to the wickedneſſe of others. Uncleanneſſe is an old ſinne from the beginning, but the *Sodomites* will be filthy in a new way, and therefore it carries their name to this day. Some invent new errours, others new oathes, ſuch as are of their own coyning, hot out of the mint, they ſcorne to ſwear after the old fashion. Others new devices of perſecuting, as *Julian* had a way by himſelf different from all before him; and to the end of the world every age will exceed other in the degrees of ſinning. *Iſhmael* and the mockers of the old world, were but children and bunglers to the ſcoffers and *cruel-mockers* of the laſt time. Well take heed of ſhewing thy wit in inventing new ſinnes, leſt thou ſtirre up God to invent new puniſhments. *Is not deſtruction to the wicked, and a ſtrange puniſhment to the workers of iniquity?* Job 31. 3. *Sodome* ſinned after a new mode, and God deſtroyes them after a new

way, ſends hell from above upon them. Some have invented new opinions, Monſtrous errours, and God hath ſuited their monſtrous errors with births as monſtrous of their own body.

2. Secondly, they were not only the inventers of ſinne, but are ſtill the chief tempters to, and promoters of ſinne in the world, therefore call'd ὁ πειράζων, the tempter; and ſinne called *the work of the devil*, whoever commits it; as the houſe goes by the name of the Maſter-workman, though he uſeth his ſervants hands to build it. O take heed of ſoliciting others to ſinne: thou takeſt the devils office (as I may ſay) out of his hand: let him do it himſelfe if he will; make not thy ſelfe ſo like him. To tempt another is worſe than to ſin thy ſelfe. It ſpeaks ſinne to be of great growth in that man, that doth it knowingly and willingly. Herbs and flowers ſhed not their ſeed till ripe, creatures propagate not, till of ſtature and age. What do thoſe, that tempt others, but diffuſe their wicked opinions and practices, and as it were raiſe up ſeed to the devil; thereby to keep up the name of their infernal Father in the world? this ſhews ſin is mighty in them indeed. Many a man though ſo cruel to his own ſoul as to be drunk or ſweare, yet will not like this in a childe or ſervant: what are they then but devils incarnate, who teach their children the devils Catechiſme, to ſweare and lye, drink and drab? If you meet ſuch, be not afraid to call them (as *Paul* did *Elymas*, when he would have perverted the Deputy) children of the devil, full of all ſubtilty and miſchief, and enemies of all righteouſneſſe. O do you not know what you do, when you tempt? I'le tell you, you do that, which you cannot undo by your own repentance; thou poiſoneſt one with errour, initiateſt another in the devils School, (Alehouſe I mean) but afterwards may be thou ſeeſt thy miſtake, and recanteſt thy errour, thy folly, and giveſt over thy drunken trade; art thou ſure now to rectifie and convert them with thy ſelfe? alas poor creatures! this is out of thy power, they may be will ſay as he (though he did it upon a better account) that was ſolicited to turne back to popery by him, who had before perſwaded him to renounce the ſame, *You have given me one turne, but ſhall not give me another.* And what a grief to thy ſpirit will it be, to ſee theſe going to hell on thy errand,

and

and thou not able to call them back? thou mayeſt cry out as *Lamech*, *I have ſlain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.* Nay, when thou art aſleep in thy grave, he whom thou ſeduced'ſt may have drawn in others, and thy name may be quoted to commend the opinion and practice to others, by which (as it is ſaid, though in another ſenſe, *Abel being dead, yet ſpeaks*) thou mayeſt, though dead, ſin in thoſe that are alive, generation after generation. A little ſpark kindled by the error of one, hath coſt the pains of many ages to quench it, and when thought to be out, hath broke forth again.

Thirdly, They are not barely wicked, but maliciouſly wicked. The Devil hath his name ὁ πονηρὸς, to denote his ſpightful nature, his deſire to vex and miſchief others. When he draws ſouls to ſin, it is not becauſe he taſtes any ſweetneſſe, or findes any profit therein; he hath too much light to have any joy or peace in ſin: he knows his doome, and trembles at the thought of it, and yet his ſpightful nature makes him vehemently deſire and unceſſantly endeavour the damnation of ſouls. As you ſhall ſee a mad dogge run after a flock of ſheep, kill one, then another, and when dead, not able to eat of their fleſh, but kills to kill: ſo Satan is carried out with a boundleſſe rage againſt man, eſpecially the Saints, he would not, if he could, leave one of Chriſts flock alive; ſuch is the height of his malice againſt God whom he hates with a perfect hatred, and becauſe he cannot reach him with a direct blow, therefore he ſtrikes him at ſecond hand through his Saints; that wicked arme which reacheth not to God, is extended againſt theſe excellent on the earth, well knowing the life of God is in a manner bound up in theirs. God cannot outlive his honour, and his honour ſpeeds as his mercy is exalted or depreſſed; this being the attribute God means to honour in their ſalvation ſo highly, and therefore maligned above the reſt by Satan. And this is the worſt that can be ſaid of theſe wicked ſpirits, that they maliciouſly ſpite God, and in God the glory of his mercy. 3.

Firſt, this may help us to conceive more fully what the deſperate wickedneſſe of mans nature is, which is ſo hard to be known, becauſe it can never be ſeen at once, it being a fountain whoſe immenſity conſiſts not in the ſtreame of actual ſin (that is viſible, and may ſeem little) but in the ſpring that *Uſe* 1.

unceſſantly feeds this, but here is a glaſſe that will give us the ſhape of our hearts truly like themſelves. Seeſt thou the monſtrous pitch and height of wickedneſſe that is in the devil, all this there is in the heart of every man, there is no leſſe wickedneſſe potentially in the tameſt ſinner on earth, than in the devils themſelves, and that one day thou whoever thou art wilt ſhew to purpoſe, if God prevent thee not by his renewing grace, thou art not yet fledg'd, thy wings are not grown to make thee a flying Dragon, but thou art of the ſame brood, the ſeed of this ſerpent is in thee, and the devil begets a child like himſelf; thou yet ſtandeſt in a ſoile not ſo proper for the ripening of ſinne, which will not come to its fulneſſe till tranſplanted unto hell. Thou who art here ſo maidenly and modeſt, as to bluſh at ſome ſinnes out of ſhame, and forbear the acting of others out of fear: when there thou ſhalt ſee thy caſe as deſperate as the devil doth his, then thou wilt ſpit out thy blaſphemies with which thy nature is ſtuft, with the ſame malice that he doth. The Indians have a conceit that when they die, they ſhall be transform'd into the deformed likeneſſe of the devil, therefore in their language they have the ſame word for a dead man and the devil; ſinne makes the wicked like him before they come there, but indeed they will come to their countenance more fully there, when thoſe flames ſhall waſh off that paint, which here hides their complexion. The Saints in heaven ſhall be like the Angels in their alacrity, love and conſtancy to ſerve God; and the damned like the devils in ſinne as well as puniſhment. This one conſideration might be of excellent uſe to unbottome a ſinner, and abaſe him ſo as never to have high thought of himſelf. It is eaſe to run down a perſon whoſe life is wicked, and convince him of the evil of his actions, and make him confeſſe what he doth is evil; but here is the thicket we loſe him in, he will ſay, 'tis true, I am overſeen, I do what I ſhould not, God forgive me: but my heart is good. Thy heart good, ſinner? and ſo is the devils; his nature is wicked and thine as bad as his. Theſe pimples in thy face ſhew the heat of thy corrupt nature within, and without Goſpel-phyſick, the blood of Chriſt applied to thee, thou wilt die a Leper; none but Chriſt can give thee a new heart, till which thou wilt every day grow worſe and worſe. Sin is an hereditary diſeaſe that encreaſeth with age. A young ſinner will be an old devil.

Again,,

Again, it would be of uſe to the Saints, eſpecially thoſe in whom God by his timely call foreſtall'd the devils market; as ſometimes the Spirit of God takes ſin in its quarters before it comes into the field, in the ſinnes of youth: now ſuch a one finding not thoſe daring ſinnes committed by him that others have been left unto, may poſſibly not be affected ſo with his own ſinne or Gods mercy. O let ſuch a one behold here the wickedneſſe of his heart in this glaſſe of the devils nature, and he will ſee himſelf, as a great debtor to the mercy of God as *Manaſſes*, or the worſt of ſinners, as in pardoning, ſo in preventing the ſame curſed nature with theirs, before it gave fire on God with thoſe bloody ſinnes which they committed. That thou didſt not act ſuch outragious ſinnes, thou art beholden to Gods gracious ſurprize, and not the goodneſſe of thy nature which hath the devils ſtamp on it, for which God might have cruſht thee, as we do the brood of Serpents before they ſting, knowing what they will do in time. Who will ſay that *Faux* ſuffered unjuſtly, becauſe the Parliament was not blown up? it was enough that the Materials for that Maſſacre were provided, and he taken there with match and fire about him ready to lay the traine; and canſt thou ſay when God firſt took hold on thee, that thou had'ſt not thoſe weapons of rebellion about thee, a nature fully charged with enmity againſt God, which in time would have made its own report of what for preſent lay like unfired pouder ſilent in thy boſome, O Chriſtian, think of this, and be humbled for thy villainous nature, and ſay, Bleſſed be God that ſent his Spirit and grace ſo timely to ſtay thy hand, (as *Abigail* to *David*) while thy nature meditated nothing but Warre againſt God and his Lawes. *Uſe* 2.

Again. Thirdly, are the devils ſo wickedly malicious againſt God himſelf? O Sirs, take the right notion of ſinne, and you will hate it. The reaſon why we are ſo eaſily perſwaded to ſin is, becauſe we underſtand not the bottome of his deſigne in drawing a creature to ſinne. It is with men in ſinning as it is with Armies in fighting; Captaines beat their Drummes for Voluntiers, and promiſe all that liſt pay and plunder, and this makes them come trowling in: but few conſider what the ground of the War is; againſt whom, or for what. Satan enticeth to *Uſe* 3.

ſinne, and give golden promiſes what they ſhall have in his ſervice with which ſilly ſouls are won: but how few ask their ſouls, Whom do I ſinne againſt? what is the devils deſigne in drawing me to ſinne? Shall I tell thee? doſt thou think 'tis thy pleaſure, or profit he deſires in thy ſinning? alas, he means nothing leſſe, he hath greater plots in his head than ſo. He hath by his Apoſtaſie proclaimed warre againſt God, and he brings thee by ſinning to eſpouſe his quarrel, and to jeopard the life of thy ſoul in defence of his pride and luſt; which that he may do, he cares no more for the damnation of thy ſoul, than the great Turk doth to ſee a company of his ſlaves cut off for the carrying on of his deſigne in a ſiege: And dareſt thou venture to go into the field upon his quarrel againſt God? O Earth, tremble thou at the preſence of the Lord. This bloody *Joab* ſets thee, where never any came off alive. O ſtand not where Gods bullets fly, throw down thy armes, or thou art a dead man. Whatever others do, O ye Saints, abhorre the thoughts of ſinning willingly, which when you do, you help the devil againſt God, and what more unnatural than for a childe to be ſeen in armes againſt his father?

CHAP. VII.

Of Satans plot to defile the Chriſtians ſpirit with heart-ſinnes.

The ſecond point followes.

Doct. 2. THat theſe wicked ſpirits do chiefly annoy the Saints with and provoke them to ſpiritual ſinnes. Sinnes may be called ſpiritual upon a double account; either from the ſubject wherein they are acted, or from the object about which they are converſant.

Firſt, in regard of the ſubject; when the ſpirit or heart is the ſtage whereon ſin is acted, this is a ſpiritual ſinne; ſuch are all impure thoughts, vile affections and deſires; though the object be fleſhly luſt, yet are ſpiritual ſinnes, becauſe they are purely

purely acts of the soul and spirit, and break not forth unto the outward man.

Secondly, in regard of the object, when that is spiritual and not carnal, such as are idolatry, error, spiritual pride, unbelief, &c. both which *Paul* calls *the filthiness of the spirit*, and distinguisheth them from *filthiness of the flesh*, 2 Cor. 7. 1.

SECT. 1.

First, of the first, Satan labours what he can to provoke the Christian to heart-sinnes, to stirre up and foment these inward motions of sinne in the Christians bosome; hence it is he can go about no duty but these (his Impes I may call them) haunt him, one motion or other darts in to interrupt him, as *Paul* tells us of himselfe, *When he would do good, evil was present with him*; if a Christian should turne back, when ever these crosse the way of him, he should never go on his journey to heaven. It is the chief game the devil hath left to play against the children of God; now his field-army is broken, and his commanding power taken away which he had over them, to come out of these his holds where he lyes sculking, and fall upon their rear with these suggestions. He knows his credit now is not so great with the soul, as when it was his slave; then no drudgery work was so base that it would not do at his command, but now the soul is out of his bondage, and he must not think to command anothers servant as his own: No, all he can do is to watch the fittest season (when the Christian least suspects) and then to present some sinful motion handsomely drest up to the eye of the soul, that the Christian may (before he is aware) take this brat up and handle it in his thoughts, till at last he makes it his own by embracing it; and this he knowes will defile the soul, and may be this boy sent in at the window may open the door to let in a greater thief; or if he should not so prevaile, yet the guilt of these heart-sinnes, yea their very neighbour-hood will be a sad vexation to a gracious heart, whose nature is so pure that it abhorres all filthinesse, (so that to be haunted with such motions is, as if a living man should be

chain'd

chain'd to a ſtinking carcaſe, that wherever he goes he muſt draw that after him) and whoſe love is ſo dear to Chriſt that it cannot bear the company of thoſe thoughts without amazement and horrour, which are ſo contrary and abuſive to his beloved. This makes Satan ſo deſirous to be ever raking in the unregenerate part, that as a dunghil ſtirr'd, it may offend them both with the noiſome ſtreames which ariſe from it.

SECT. 2.

Uſe 1. Firſt, let this be for triàl of thy ſpiritual ſtate. What entertainment findes Satan when he comes with theſe ſpirituals of wickedneſſe, and ſolicites thee to dwell on them? canſt thou diſpenſe with the filthineſſe of thy ſpirit, ſo thy hands be clean? or doſt thou wreſtle againſt theſe heart-ſinnes as well as others? I do not ask whether ſuch gueſts come within thy door, for the worſt of ſinnes may be found in the motions of them, not only paſſing by the door of a Chriſtian, but looking in alſo, as holy motions may be found ſtirring in the boſome of wicked men: but I ask thee whether thou canſt finde in thy heart to lodge theſe gueſts and bid them welcome. 'Tis like thou wouldſt not be ſeen to walk in the ſtreet with ſuch company, not lead a whore by the hand through the Town, not violently break open thy neighbours houſe to murder or rob him: but canſt thou not under thy own roofe, in the withdrawing room of thy ſoul let thy thoughts hold up an unclean luſt, while thy heart commits ſpeculative folly with it? canſt thou not draw thy neighbour into thy den, and there rend him limb from limb by thy malice, and thy heart not ſo much as cry murder, murder? In a word canſt thou hide any one ſinne in the vance roofe of thy heart, there to ſave the life of it when enquired after by the Word and Spirit, as *Rahab* hid the ſpies, and ſent the King of *Jerichoes* meſſengers to purſue them, as if they had been gone? Perhaps thou canſt ſay, the adulterer, the murtherer is not here, thou haſt ſent theſe ſinnes away long ago, and all this while thou hideſt them the love of thy ſoul; know it or thou ſhalt another day know it to thy coſt, thou art ſtark naught. If there were a ſpark of the

the life of God or the love of Chriſt in thy boſome, though thou couldſt not hinder ſuch motions in thy ſoul, yet thou wouldſt not conceal them, much leſſe nouriſh them in thy boſome; when over-powered by them thou wouldſt call in help from heaven againſt theſe deſtroyers of thy ſoul.

Secondly, ſhew your loyalty, O ye Saints, to God by a vigorous reſiſtance of, and wreſtling againſt theſe ſpirituals of wickedneſſe. Firſt, Conſider, Chriſtian, heart-ſinnes are ſins as well as any; *The thought of fooliſhneſſe is ſinne*, Prov. 24. 9. Mercury is poyſon in the water diſtill'd, as well as in the groſſe body. Uncleanneſſe, Covetouſneſſe, Murder, are ſuch in the heart as well as in the outward; every point of hell, is hell. Secondly, conſider thy ſpirit is the ſeat of the Holy Spirit. He takes up the whole heart for his lodging, and 'tis time for him to be gone when he ſees his houſe let over his head. Defile not thy ſpirit, till thou art weary of his company. Thirdly, Conſider, there may be more wickedneſſe in a ſin of the heart, than of the hand and outward man; for the aggravation of theſe is taken from the behaviour of the heart in the act. The more of the heart and ſpirit is let out, the more malignity is let in to any ſinful act. *To back-ſlide in heart*, is more than to back-ſlide; 'tis the comfort of a poor ſoul when tempted and troubled for his relapſes, that though his foot ſlides back, yet his heart turns not back, but faceth Heaven and Chriſt at the ſame time; ſo *to erre in the heart*, is worſe than to have an errour in the head; therefore God aggravates *Iſrael's* ſinne with this, *They do always erre in their heart*. Their hearts runne them upon the errour, they liked Idolatry, and ſo were ſoon made to believe what pleaſed them beſt. As on the contrary, the more of the heart and ſpirit is in any holy ſervice, the more real goodneſs there is in it, though it fall ſhort of others in the outward expreſſion. The Widows two mites ſurpaſſed all the reſt, Chriſt himſelf being Judge; ſo in ſinne, though the internal acts of ſinne in thoughts and affections ſeem light upon mans balance if compared with outward acts, yet theſe may be ſo circumſtanciated that they may exceed the other in Gods account; *Peter* layes the accent of *Magus* his ſinne on the wicked *thought*, which his words betrayed to be in his heart, *Pray God, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven*, Acts 8. 22. *Sauls* ſinne in ſparing *Agag*, and ſaving

Uſe 2.

Heb. 3. 10.

the best of the sheep and oxen, which he was commanded to destroy, was materially a farre lesse sin than *Davids* adultery and murder, yet it is made equal with a greater than both, even witchcraft it selfe, 1 *Sam.* 15. 23. and whence receiv'd his sin such a dye, but from the wickednesse of his heart, that was worse than *Davids* when deepest in the temptation? Fourthly, if Satan get into thy spirit and defile it, O how hard wilt thou finde it to stay there? thou hast already sipt of his broth, and now art more likely to be overcome at last to sit down and make thy full meale of that, which by tasting hath vitiated thy palate already. It were strange if while thou art musing, and thy heart hot with the thoughts of lust, the fire should not break forth at thy lips, or worse.

Quest. But what help have we against this sort of Satans temptations?

Answ. I suppose thee a Christian, that makest this question; and if thou dost it in the plainnesse of thy heart it proves thee one. Who besides will, or can desire in earnest to be eased of these guests? even when a carnal heart prayes for deliverance from them, he would be loath his prayer should be heard. *Not yet Lord*, the heart of such a one cryes, as *Austin* confessed of himself. Sin is as truely the off-spring of the soul as children are of our bodyes, and it finds as much favour in our eyes, yea more, for the sinner can slay a son to save a sin alive, *Micah* 6. 7. and of all sinnes none are more made on than these heart-sins.

First, because they are the first-born of the sinful heart, and the chiefest strength of the soul is laid out upon them.

Secondly, because the heart hath more scope in them than in outward acts. The proud man is staked down oft to a short state, and cannot ruffle it in the world, and appear to others in that pomp he would; but within his own bosome he can set up a stage, and in his own foolish heart present himself as great a Prince as he pleaseth. The malicious can kill in his desires as many in a few minutes, as the Angel smote in a night of *Senacheribs* host. *Nero* thus could slay all *Rome* on the block at once.

Thirdly, these sins stay with the soul when the other leave it; when the sinner hath cripled his body with drunkennesse and

and filthineſſe, and proves *miles emeritus*, cannot follow the devils camp any longer in thoſe wayes, then theſe curſed luſts will entertain the ſinner with ſtories of his old pranks and pleaſures. In a word, theſe inward luſts of the heart have nothing but the conſcience of a Deity to quell them. Other ſins put the ſinner to ſhame before men, and as ſome that believed on Chriſt, durſt not confeſſe him openly becauſe they loved the praiſe of men, ſo there are ſinners who are kept from vouching their luſts openly, for the ſame tenderneſſe to their reputation; but here is no feare of that, if they can but forget that heaven ſees them, or perſwade themſelves there is no danger from thence; the coaſt then is clear, they may be as wicked as they pleaſe. Theſe make inward ſins ſo hug'd and embraced. If thou therefore canſt finde thy heart ſet againſt theſe, I may venture to call thee a Chriſtian, and for thy help againſt them,

Firſt, be earneſt with God in prayer to move and order thy heart in its thoughts and deſires. If the tongue be ſuch an unruly thing that few can tame; O what is the heart where ſuch a multitude of thoughts are flying forth as thick as bees from the hive, and ſparks from the furnace! It is not in man, not in the holieſt on earth to do this without divine aſſiſtance. Therefore we finde *David* ſo often crying out in this reſpect to order his ſteps in his Word, to unite his heart to his feare, to encline his heart to his teſtimonies. As a ſervant, when the childe he tends is troubleſome, and will not be ruled by him, calls out to the father to come to him, who no ſooner ſpeaks but all is whiſt with him; No doubt holy *David* found his heart beyond his skill or power, that makes him ſo oft do its errand to God. Indeed God hath promiſed thus much to his children, to order their ſteps for them, *Pſal.* 37. 22. only he looks they ſhould bring their hearts to him for that end. *Commit thy work to the Lord, and thy thoughts ſhall be eſtabliſhed*, Prov. 16. 3. or ordered. Art thou ſetting thy face towards an Ordinance, where thou art ſure to meet Satan, who will be diſturbing thee with worldly thoughts, and may be worſe? Let God know from thy mouth whither thou art going, and what thy feares are; never doth the ſoul march in ſo goodly order, as when it puts it ſelf under the conduct of God. 1.

2. Secondly, set a strong guard about thy outward senses: these are Satans landing places, especially the eye and the eare. Take heed what thou importest at these; vaine discourse seldome passeth without leaving some tincture upon the heart, as unwholesome aire inclines to putrefaction things sweet in themselves: so unsavoury discourse to corrupt the minde that is pure; look thou breatheſt therefore in a clear aire. And for thy eye, let it not wander, wanton objects cause wanton thoughts. *Job* knew his eye and his thoughts were like to go together, and therefore to secure one, he covenants with the other, *Job* 31. 1.

3. Thirdly, often reflect upon thy self in a day, and observe what company is with thy heart. A careful Master will ever and anon be looking into his work-house, and see what his servants are doing, and a wise Christian should do the same. We may know by the noise in the school, the Master is not there: much of the mis-rule in our bosomes ariseth from the neglect of visiting our hearts. Now when thou art parlying with thy soul, make this threefold enquiry.

1. First, whether that which thy heart is thinking on be good or evil. If evil and wicked, such as are proud, unclean, distrustful thoughts, shew thy abhorrency of them, and chide thy soul sharply for so much as holding conference with them, of which nought can come, but dishonour to God, and mischief to thy own soul, and stirre up thy heart to mourne for the evil neighbour-hood of them, and by this thou shalt give a testimony of thy faithfulnesse to God. When *David* mourn'd for *Abner*, all *Israel* 'tis said *understood that day, that it was not of the King to slay Abner*: Thy mourning for them will shew these thoughts are not so much of thee, as of Satan.

2. Secondly, if they be not broadly wicked, enquire whether they be not empty, frothy, vaine imaginations, that have no subserviency to the glory of God, thy own good or others; and if so, leave not till thou hast made thy self apprehensive of Satans designe on thee in them; though such are not for thy purpose, yet they are for his, they serve his turn to keep thee from better. All the water is lost that runnes beside the Mill, and all thy thoughts are waste which help thee not to do Gods work withal in thy generall or particular calling. The Bee will not sit on a flower

flower where no honey can be ſuckt, neither ſhould the Chriſtian. Why ſitteſt thou here idle (thou ſhouldeſt ſay to thy ſoul) when thou haſt ſo much to do for God and thy ſoul, and ſo little time to diſpatch it in?

Thirdly, if thou findeſt they are good for matter thy heart is buſied about, then enquire whether they be good for time and manner, which being wanting they degenerate, 3.

Firſt, for the ſeaſon; that is good fruit which is brought forth in its ſeaſon. Chriſt liked the work his mother would have put him upon as well her ſelf, *John* 2. but his time was not come. Good thoughts and meditations miſplaced, are like ſome interpretations of Scripture, good truths, but bad expoſitions; they fit not the place they are drawn from, nor theſe the time. To pray when we ſhould hear, or be muſing on the Sermon when we ſhould pray, this is to rob God one way to pay him another. 1.

Secondly, carefully obſerve the manner. Thy heart may meditate a good matter, and ſpoil it in the doing. Thou art may be muſing of thy ſinnes, and affecting thy heart into a ſenſe of them, but ſo, that while thou art ſtirring up thy ſorrow thou weakeneſt thy faith on the promiſe, that is thy ſinne. He is a bad Chyrurgion, that in opening a veine goes ſo deep that he cuts an artery, and lames the arme, if not kills the man. Or thou art thinking of thy family and providing for that, this thou oughteſt to do and wert worſe than an infidel if thou neglecteſt, but may be theſe thoughts are ſo diſtracting and diſtruſtful as if there were no promiſe, no providence to relieve thee. God takes this ill, becauſe it reflects upon his care of thee; O how near doth our duty here ſtand to our ſinne! ſo much care is neceſſary ballaſt to the ſoul, a little more ſinks it under the waves of unbelief; like ſome things very wholeſome, but one degree more of hot or cold would make them poyſon. 2.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

How Satan labours to corrupt the Christians minde with errour.

THe second sort of spiritual sinnes are such as are not only acted in the spirit, but are conversant about spiritual objects proper to the souls nature that is a spirit, and not laid out in carnal passions of fleshly lusts, in which the soul acts but as a Pander for the body, and partakes of their delights only by way of sympathy; for as the soul feels the bodies pains no other way than by sympathy so neither doth it share in the pleasures of the flesh by any proper taste it hath of them, but only from its neer neighbourhood with the body doth sympathize with its joy; but in spiritual wickednesses that corrupt the minde, here the soul moves in its own sphere, with a delight proper to it selfe; and there are no lesse of these than the other. There is hardly a fleshly lust, but hath some spiritual sin analogical to it, as they say there is no species of creatures on the land but may be pattern'd in the sea: Thus the heart of man can produce spiritual sinnes answering carnal lusts; for whoredom and uncleannesse of the flesh, there is idolatry call'd in Scripture spiritual adultery, from which the seat of Antichrist is call'd spiritual *Sodom*; for sensual drunkennesse, there is a drunkenness of the minde intoxicating the judgment with errour, a drunkenness of the heart in cares and feares; for carnal pride in beauty, riches, honour, there is a spiritual pride of gifts, graces, &c. Now Satan in an especial manner assaults the Christian with such as these; it would require a larger discourse than I can allow to run over the several kindes of them; I shall of many pick out two or three. As first, Satan labours to corrupt the minde with erroneous principles, he was at work at the very first plantation of the Gospel, sowing his darnel, assoon almost as Christ his wheate, which sprung up in pernicious errours, even in the Apostles times, which made them take the weeding-hook into their hands, and in all their Epistles labour to countermine Satan in this design. Now Satan

Satan hath a threefold design in this his endeavour to corrupt the mindes of men, especially Professours, with errour.

SECT. 1.

First, he doth this in despite to God, against whom he cannot vent his malice at a higher rate than by corrupting his truth, which God hath so highly honoured, *Psal.* 138. 2. *Thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy Name.* Every creature bears the Name of God, but in his Word and truth therein contained 'tis writ at length, and therefore he is more choice of this, than of all his other works; he cares not much what becomes of the world and all in it, so he keeps his Word, and saves his truth. Ere long we shall see the world on a light flame, the heavens and earth shall passe away, *but the Word of the Lord endures for ever.* When God will, he can make more such worlds as this is, but he cannot make another truth, and therefore he will not lose one *iota* thereof. Satan knowing this, sets all his wits on work to deface this truth, and disfigure it by unsound doctrine. The Word is the glasse in which we see God, and seeing him are changed into his likenesse by his Spirit. If this glasse be crackt, then our conceptions we have of God will misrepresent him unto us, whereas the Word in its native clearnesse sets him out in all his glory unto our eye. 1.

Secondly, he endeavours to draw into this spiritual sin of errour, as the most subtil and effectual means to weaken, if not destroy the power of godlinesse in them. The Apostle joynes the Spirit of power and a sound minde together, 2 *Tim.* 1. 7. Indeed the power of holinesse in practice depends much on the soundnesse of judgement. Godlinesse is the childe of truth, and it must be nurst, if we will have it thrive with no other milk than of its own mother. Therefore we are exhorted *to desire the sincere milk of the Word, that we may grow*, 1 Pet. 2. 2. ἄδολον γάλα, if this milk be but a little dasht with errour, it is not so nutritive. All errour, how innocent soever any may seem, (like the Ivy) draws away the strength of the souls love from holinesse. *Hosea* tells us, Whoredom and wine take away the heart; now errour is spiritual adultery. *Paul* speaks of his espousing them 2.

to

to Christ; when a person receives an errour, he takes a stranger into Christs bed, and it is the nature of adulterous love to take away the wifes heart from her true husband, that she delights not in his company so much as of her adulterous lover: and do we not see it at this day fulfill'd? do not many shew more zeal in contending for one errour, than for many truths? how strangely are the hearts of many taken off from the wayes of God, their love cool'd to the Ordinances and Messengers of Christ? and all this occasioned by some corrupt principle got into their bosomes, which controuls Christ and his truth, as *Hagar* and her son did *Sarah* and her childe. Indeed Christ will never enjoy true conjugal love from the soul, till like *Abraham* he turns these out of doors. Errour is not so innocent a thing as many think it; it is as unwholesome food to the body, that poysons the spirits and surfeits the whole body, which seldome passeth away and not break out into sores. As the knowledge of Christ carries a soul above the pollution of the world, so errour entangles and betrayes it to those lusts, whose hands it had escaped.

3. Thirdly, Satan in drawing a soul into this spiritual sin hath a designe to disturb the peace of the Church, which is rent and shattered when this fire-ship comes among them. *I hear* (saith *Paul*) *there are divisions among you, and I partly believe it, for there must be heresies*, 1 Cor. 11.18,19. implying that divisions are the natural issue of heresie. Errour cannot well agree with errour, except it be against the truth, then indeed (like *Pilate* and *Herod*) they are easily made friends, but when truth seems to be overcome, and the battel is over with that, then they fall out among themselves, and therefore it is no wonder if it be so troublesome a neighbour to truth. O Sirs, what a sweet silence and peace was there among Christians a dozen years ago; methinks the looking back to those blessed dayes in this respect, (though they had also another way their troubles, yet not so uncomfortable, because that storme united, this scatters the Saints spirits) is joyous to remember in what unity and love Christians walk't, that the Persecuters of those times might have said, as their Predecessours did of the Saints in primitive times, *See how they love one another*; but now alas they may jeere and say, See how they that loved so dearly are ready to pluck one anothers throats out.

SECT.

SECT. 2.

The application of this ſhall be only in a word of exhortation to all, eſpecially you who bear the name of Chriſt by a more eminent Profeſſion of him. O beware of this ſoul-infection, this leproſie of the head. I hope you do not think it needleſſe, for 'tis the diſeaſe of the times. This plague is begun, yea, ſpreads apace; not a flock, a Congregation hardly that hath not this ſcab among them. *Paul* was a Preacher the beſt of us all may write after, and he preſſeth this home upon the Saints, yea, in the conſtant courſe of his preaching it made a piece of his Sermon, *Acts* 20. 30, 31. he ſets us Preachers alſo on this work: *Take heed to your ſelves, and to all the flock; for I know this, that after my departure ſhall grievous wolves enter; alſo of your own ſelves ſhall men ariſe ſpeaking perverſe things*; therefore watch. And then he preſents his own example, that he hardly made a Sermon for ſeveral years, but this was part of it to warn every one night and day with tears. We need not propheſie what Impoſtors may come upon the ſtage, when we go off: There are too many at preſent above board of this gang, drawing diſciples after them. And if it be our duty to warn you of them, ſurely 'tis yours to watch, leſt you by any of them be led into temptation this hour thereof, wherein Satan is let looſe in ſo great a meaſure to deceive the Nation. May you not as eaſily be ſowered with this leaven, as the diſciples whom Chriſt bids beware? Are you priviledged above thoſe famous Churches of *Galatia* and *Corinth*, many of which were bewitched with falſe teachers, and in a manner turned to another Goſpel? Is Satan grown Orthodox, or have his inſtruments loſt their cunning, who hunt for ſouls? In a word, is there not a ſympathy between thy corrupt heart and errour? Haſt thou not a diſpoſition, which like the *fomes* of the earth, makes it natural for theſe weeds to grow in thy ſoile. Seeſt thou not many proſtrated by this enemy, who ſate upon the mountain of their faith, and thought it ſhould never have been removed, ſurely they would have took it ill to have been told you are the men and women that will decry Sabbaths, which now ye count holy; you will turn Pelagians, who now defie the name; you will deſpiſe Pro-

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phecy it self, who now seem so much to honour the Prophets; you will throw family-duties out of doors, who dare not now go out of doors, till you have prayed there. Yet these, and more than these are come to passe, and doth it not behove thee (Christian) to take heed lest thou fallest also? and that thou mayest not,

1. First, make it thy chief care to get a through change of thy heart. If once the root of the matter be in thee, and thou beest bottom'd by a lively faith on Christ, thou art then safe, I do not say wholly free from all errour, but this I am sure, free from ingulphing thy soul in damning errour. *They went out from us,* (saith Saint *John*) *but they were not of us, for if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us.* 1 John 2. 19. As if he had said, they had some outward Profession, and common work of the Spirit with us, which they have either lost or carried over to the devils quarters, but they never had the unction of the sanctifying Spirit. By this *ver.* 20. he distinguisheth them, and comforts the sincere ones, who possibly might feare their own fall by their departure: *But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.* 'Tis one thing to know a truth, and another thing to know it by unction. An hypocrite may do the former, the Saint only the latter. It is this unction which gives the soul the savour of the knowledge of Christ? those are the fit prey for Impostors, who are enlightened, but not enlivened. O it's good to have the heart establish't with grace, this as an anchor will keep us from being set a drift, and carried about with divers and strange doctrines, as the Apostle teacheth us, *Heb.* 13. 9.

2. Secondly, ply the work of mortification. Crucifie the flesh daily. Heresie though a spiritual sinne, yet by the Apostle reckon'd among the deeds of the flesh, *Gal.* 5. 20. because it is occasioned by fleshly motives, and nourisht by carnal food and fuel. Never any turn'd Heretick, but flesh was at the bottome, either they served their belly, or a lust of pride; 'twas the way to Court, or secur'd their estates, and saved their lives, as sometimes the reward of truth is fire and fagot; some pad or other is in the straw when least seen, and therefore it's no wonder that heresies should end in the flesh, which in a manner sprang from it. The rheume in the head ascends in fumes from the stomack, and

and returnes thither, or unto the lungs which at laſt fret and ulcerate: Carnal affections firſt ſend up their fumes to the underſtanding, clouding that, yea, bribing it to receive ſuch and ſuch principles for truths, which embraced, fall down into the life corrupting that with the ulcer of profaneneſſe. So that, Chriſtian, if once thou canſt take off thy engagements to the fleſh, and become a free-man, ſo as not to give thy vote to gratifie thy carnal fears or hopes, thou wilt then be a ſure friend to truth.

Thirdly, waite conſcionably on the Miniſtry of the Word. 3. Satan commonly ſtops the eare from hearing ſound Doctrine, before he opens it to embrace corrupt. This is the method of ſouls apoſtatizing from truth, 2 *Tim.* 4. 3, 4. *They ſhall turn their eares from the truth, and ſhall be turned unto fables.* Satan like a cunning thief drawes the ſoul out of the road into ſome lane or corner, and there robs him of the truth. By rejecting of one Ordinance we deprive our ſelves of the bleſſing of all other: ſay not that thou prayeſt to be led into truth, he will not hear thy prayer if thou turneſt thine eare from hearing the law. He that loves his childe when he ſees him play the truant, will whip him to ſchool: If God loves a ſoul, he will bring him back to the Word with ſhame and ſorrow.

Fourthly, When thou heareſt any unuſual Doctrine, though 4. never ſo pleaſing, make not up the match haſtily with it: have ſome better teſtimony of it before you open your heart to it. The Apoſtle indeed bids us *entertain ſtrangers*, for ſome have entertain'd Angels unawares, *Heb.* 13. 3. but he would not have us carried about with *ſtrange Doctrine*, ver. 9. by this I am ſure ſome have entertained devils. I confeſſe, 'tis not enough to reject a doctrine, becauſe ſtrange to us, but ground we have to wait and enquire. *Paul* marvelled that the *Galatians* were ſo ſoon removed from him, who had called them unto the grace of Chriſt, unto another Goſpel; they might ſure have ſtayed till they had acquainted *Paul* with it, and asked his judgement; what, no ſooner an Impoſtour come into the countrey and open his pack, but buy all his ware at firſt ſight? O friends, were it not more wiſdom to pray ſuch new notions over and over again, to ſearch the Word and our hearts by it, yea, not to truſt our own hearts, but call in counſel from others. If your

Minister have not so much credit with you, yet the most holy, humble and establish't Christians you can finde. Errour is like fish, which must be eaten new, or it will stink. When those dangerous errours sprung up first in *New England*, O how unsettled were many of the Churches? what an outis was made, as if some Mine of gold had been discovered; but in a while, when those errours came to their complexion, and it was perceived whither they were bound, to destroy Churches, Ordinances, and Power of Godlinesse: then such as feared God, who had slept aside, returned back with shame and sorrow.

CHAP. IX.

Of Pride of Gifts, and how Satan tempts the Christian thereto.

THe second spiritual wickednesse which Satan provokes unto, especially the Saint, is spiritual pride. This was the sin made him of a blessed Angel a cursed Devil, and as it was his personal sinne, so he chiefly labours to derive it to the sons of men: and he so far prevailed on our first Parents, that ever since this sinne hath and doth claim a kind of regency in the heart, making use both of bad and good to draw her Chariot. First, of evil; Pride enters into the labours of other sins, they do but work to make her brave, as subjects to uphold the state and grandure of their Prince: Thus you shall see some drudge and droile, cheat, cosen, oppresse; and what mean they? O 'tis to get an estate to maintain their pride. Others fawn and flatter, lie, dissemble, and for what? to help pride up some mount of honour. Again, it maketh use of that which is good, it can work with Gods own tooles, his Ordinances, by which the holy Spirit advanceth his Kingdome of grace in the hearts of his Saints. These often are prostituted to pride. A man may be very zealous in prayer, and painful in preaching, and all the while pride is the Master whom he serves, though in Gods livery. It can take Sanctuary in the holiest actions, and hide it self under the skirt of vertue it self. Thus while a man is exercising his charity, pride may be

be the Idol in secret for which he lavisheth out his gold so freely. It is hard starving this sin, because there is nothing almost but it can live on; nothing so base that a proud heart will not be lift up with, and nothing so sacred but it will profane, even dare to drink in the bowles of the Sanctuary, nay, rather than starve it will feed on the carcases of other sinnes; *Difficilè valdè vitiatur peccatum, quod ex victoriâ vitiorum nascitur.* This minion pride will stir up the soul to resist, yea, in a manner kill some sins, that she may boastingly shew the head of them, and blow the creature up with the conceit of himself above others; as the Pharisee who through pride bragged that he was not as the Publicane; so that pride, if not look't to, will have to do every where, and hath a large sphere it moves in. Nothing indeed (without divine assistance) the creature hath or doth, but will soon become a prey to this devourer; but I am not to handle it in its latitude. Pride is either conversant about carnal objects, as pride of beauty, strength, riches and such like, or about spiritual; the latter we shall speak a little to. I confesse for the former, possibly a Saint may be catched in them, no sinne to be slighted, yet not so commonly, for ordinarily pride is of those perfections which are suitable, if not proper to the state and calling we are in: thus the Musician, he is proud of the skill he hath in his Art, by which he excells others of his rank. The Scholar, though he can play perhaps as well, yet is not proud of that, but looks on it as beneath him; no, he is proud of his learning and choice notions, and so of others. Now the life of a Christian as a Christian, is superiour to the life of man as a man; and therefore doth not value himself by these which are beneath him, but in higher and more raised perfections, which suit a Christians calling. As a natural man is proud of perfections suitable to his natural estate, as honour, beauty; so the Christian is prone chiefly, to be puffed up with perfections suitable to his life; I shall name three: pride of Gifts, pride of Grace, pride of Priviledges; these are the things which Satan chiefly labours to entangle him in.

SECT.

SECT. 1.

First, Pride of Gifts. By Gifts I mean those supernatural abilities, with which the *S*pirit of God doth enrich and endow the mindes of men, for edification of the body of Christ; of which gifts the Apostle tells us there is great diversity, and all from the same Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4. There is not greater variety of colours, and qualities in plants and flowers, with which the earth like a carpet of needle-work is variegated for the delight and service of man, than there is of gifts in the mindes of men, natural and spiritual to render them useful to one another, both in civil societies and Christian fellowship. The Christian as well as man is intended to be a sociable creature, and for the better managing this spiritual Common-wealth among Christians; God doth wisely and graciously provide and impart gifts, suitable to the place every one stands in to his brethren, as the vessels are larger or lesse in the body natural, according to their place therein. Now Satan labours what he can to taint these gifts, and fly-blow them with pride in the Christian, that so he may spoile the Christians trade and commerce, which is mutually maintained by the gifts and graces of one another. Pride of gifts hinders the Christians trade, at least thriving by their commerce two wayes.

First, pride of gifts is the cause why we do so little good with them to others.

*S*econdly, why we receive so little good from the gifts of others.

1. First, pride of gifts hinders the doing of good by them to others, and that upon a threefold account.

1. First, pride diverts a man from aiming at that end; so far as pride prevails the man prayes, preaches, &c. rather to be thought good by others, than to do good to others; rather to enthrone himself than Christ, in the opinions and hearts of his hearers. Pride carries the man aloft, to be admired for the height of his parts and notions, and will not suffer him to stoop so low as to speak of plain truths, or if he does, not plainly; he must have some fine lace, though on a plain stuffe, such a one may tickle the eare,

eare, but very unlikely to do real good to the souls: alas, it is not that he attends.

Secondly, if this painted *Jezabel* of pride be perceived to look out at the window in any exercise, whether of preaching, prayer, or conference, it doth beget a disdain in the spirits of those that heare such a one both good and bad. 'Tis a sin very odious to a gracious heart, and oft-times makes the stomack go against the food; though good, through their abhorrency of that pride they see in the instrument. It is indeed their weakness, but wo to them that by their pride lead them into temptation! nay, those that are bad and may be in the same kinde, like not that in another which they favour in themselves, and so prejudiced, return as bad as they went. 2.

Thirdly, pride of gifts robs us of Gods blessing in the use of them. The humble man may have Satan at his right hand to oppose him, but be sure the proud man shall finde God himself there to resist him, whenever he goes about any duty. God proclaims so much, and would have the proud man know whenever he meets him he will oppose him; *he resists the proud.* Great gifts are beautiful as *Rachel*, but pride makes them also barren like her. Either we must lay selfe aside, or God will lay us aside. 3.

Secondly, pride of gifts hinders the receiving of good from others. Pride fills the soul, and a full soul will take nothing from God, much lesse from man to do it good. Such a one is very dainty; It is not every Sermon, though wholesome food, nor every prayer, though savoury, will go down, he must have a choice dish, he thinks he hath better than this of his own, and is such a one like to get good? And truely we may see it, that as the plain Plowman that can eate of any homely food if wholesome; hath more health, and is able to do more work in a day, than many enjoy or can do in their whole life, that are nice, squeamish, and courtly in their fare; so the humble Christian that can feed on plain truths, and Ordinances which have not so much of the Art of man to commend them to their palate, enjoy more of God, and can do more for God, than the nicer sort of Professours, who are all to be served in a lordly dish of rare gifts. The Church of *Corinth* was famous for gifts above o- their Churches, 1 *Cor.* 1. but not in grace; none so charged for weakness: 4.

weakness in that, 1 *Cor.*3.2. he calls them *carnal*, *babes in Christ*, so weak, as not able to digest mans meat; *I have fed you*, saith *Paul*, *with milk and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.* Why? what is the matter? the reason lies, *verse* 3. *Ye are carnal, there is among you envie and strife*, vers. 4. *One saith, I am of Paul; another, I am of Apollos.* Pride makes them take parts, and make sides, one for this Preacher, another for that, as they fancied one to excel another. And this is not the way to thrive. Pride destroyes love, and love wanting edification is lost. The Devil hath made foul work in the Church by this Engine. *Zanchy* tells of one in *Geneva*, who being desired to go hear *Viretus*, that preach't at the same time with *Calvin*, answered his friend, If *Paul* were to preach, *relicto Paulo Calvinum audirem*: I would leave *Paul* himself to hear *Calvin*, And will pride in the gifts of another so far transport, even to the borders of blasphemy? what work then will pride make, when the gifts are a mans own?

SECT. 2.

Use 1. Doth Satan thus stir up Saints to this spiritual pride of gifts? first, here is a word to you that have mean gifts, yet truth of grace, be content with thy condition. Perhaps when thou hearest others, how enlargedly they pray, how able to discourse of the truths of God, and the like, thou art ready to go into a corner, and mourn to think how weak thy memory, how dull thy apprehension, how straitened thy spirit, hardly able (though in secret) to utter and expresse thy mind to God in prayer. O thou art ready to think those the happy men and women, and almost murmure at thy condition; well, canst thou not say, though I have not words I hope I have faith, I cannot dispute for the truth, but I am willing to suffer for it; I cannot remember a Sermon, but I never hear the Word, but I hate sin and love Christ more than ever: Lord, thou knowest I love thee? Truly (Christian) thou hast the better part; thou little think'st what a mercy may be wrapt up even in the meannes of thy gifts, or what temptations their gifts expose them to, which God for ought I know may in mercy deny thee. *Josephs* Coat made him finer than

than his brethren, but this cauſed all his trouble, this ſet the Archers a ſhooting their Arrowes into his ſide; thus great gifts lift a Saint up a little higher in the eyes of men, but it occaſions many temptations which thou meeteſt not with, that art kept low, what with envy from their brethren, malice from Satan, and pride in their own hearts; I dare ſay, none finde ſo hard a work to go to heaven as ſuch, much ado to bear up againſt thoſe waves and windes, while thou creepeſt along the ſhore under the winde to heaven. It is with ſuch as with ſome great Lord of little eſtate, a meaner man oft hath money in his purſe, when he hath none, and can lend his Lordſhip ſome at a need: great gifts and parts are titles of honour among men, but many ſuch may come and borrow grace and comfort of a mean gifted brother; poſſibly the Preacher of his poor neighbour. O poor Chriſtian, do not murmure or envy them, but rather pity and pray for them, they need it more than others his gifts are thine; thy grace is for thy ſelf; thou art like a Merchant that hath his Factour goes to Sea, but he hath his Adventure without hazard brought home. Thou joyneſt with him in prayer, haſt the help of his gifts, but not the temptation of his pride.

Secondly, doth Satan labour thus to draw to pride of gifts? this ſpeaks a word to you to whom God hath given more gifts than ordinary, beware of pride, that is now your ſnare. Satan is at work, if poſſible he will turn your Artillery againſt your ſelf; thy ſafety lies in thy humility, if this lock be cut the legions of hell are on thee. Remember whom thou wreſtleſt with, ſpiritual wickedneſſe, and their play is to lift up, that they may give the ſorer fall: Now the more to ſtir up thy heart againſt it, I ſhall adde ſome ſoul-humbling conſiderations. *Uſe 2.*

First, conſider theſe ſpiritual gifts are not thy own, and wilt thou be proud of anothers bounty? Is not God the Founder, and can he not ſoon be the Confounder of thy gifts? thou that art proud of thy gourd, what wilt thou be when it is gone? ſurely then thou wilt be peeviſh and angry; and truly thou takeſt the courſe to be ſtrip't of them. Gifts come on other terms than grace God gives grace as a free-hold, it hath the promiſe of this and another world, but gifts come on liking; though a father will not caſt off his childe, yet he may take away his fine coat and ornaments, if proud of them. 1.

2. Secondly, gifts are not meerly for thy self. As the light of the Sun is ministerial, it shines not for it self: so all thy gifts are for others; *Gifts for the edifying of the body.* Suppose a man should leave a chest of money in your hands to be distributed to others, what folly is it in this man to put this into his own Inventory, and applaud himself that he hath so much money? Poor soul, thou art but Gods Executour, and by that time thou hast paid all the Legacies, thou wilt see little left for thee to brag and boast of.

3. Thirdly, know (Christian) thou shalt be accountable for these talents; now with what face can a proud soul look on God? Suppose one left an Executor to pay Legacies, and this man should pay them not as Legacies of another, but gifts of his own. Christ at his ascension gave gifts, that his children should receive, thou hast some in thy hand; now a proud soul gives out all, not as the Legacy of Christ, but as his own, he assumes all to himself. O how abominable is this to entitle our selves to Christs honour!

4. Fourthly, thy gifts commend thee not to God. Man may be taken with thy expression and notion in prayer: but these are all pared off when thy prayer comes before God; *O woman,* (saith Christ) *great is thy faith*! not compt and flourishing thy language. It were good after our duties, to sort the Ingredients of which they are made up what grace contributed, and what gifts, and what pride, and when all the heterogeneal stuffe is sever'd, you shall see in what a little compasse the actings of grace in our duties will lye.

5. Fifthly, consider while thou art priding in thy gifts, thou art dwindling and withering in thy grace. Such are like corne that runs up much into straw, whose eare commonly is but light and thin. Grace is too much neglected, where gifts are too highly prized; we are commanded to be clothed with humility. Our garments cover the shame of our bodies, humility the beauty of the soul; and as a tender body cannot live without cloathes, so neither can grace without this cloathing of humility. It kills the Spirit of praise, when thou shouldest blesse God thou art applauding thy self. It destroyes Christian love, and stabs our fellowship with the Saints to the heart: A proud man hath not room enough to walk in company, because the gifts of others

he

he thinks ſtand in his way. Pride ſo diſtempers the palate, that it can reliſh nothing that is drawen from anothers veſſel.

Sixthly, it is the fore-runner of ſome great ſin, or ſome great affliction. God will not ſuffer ſuch a weed as pride to grow in his garden, without taking ſome courſe or other to root it up; may be he will let thee fall into ſome great ſin, and that ſhall bring thee home with ſhame. God uſeth ſometimes a thorn in the fleſh, to prick the bladder of pride in the Spirit; or at leaſt ſome great affliction; the very end whereof is *to hide pride from man.* As you do with your hot-metall'd horſes, ride them over plowed lands to tame them, and then you can ſit ſafely on their back. If Gods honour be in danger through thy pride, then expect a rod, and moſt likely the affliction ſhall be in that, which will be moſt grievous to thee, in the thing thou art proud of. *Hezekiah* boaſted of his treaſure, God ſends the *Chaldeans* to plunder him. *Jonah* fond of his gourd, and that is ſmitten: and if thy ſpirit be blown up with pride of gifts, thou art in danger of having them blaſted, at leaſt in the opinion of others, whoſe breath of applauſe (poſſibly) was a means to overſet thy unballaſt ſpirit. 6. Job 33. 17, 19.

SECT. 3.

But how would you direct us againſt this? *Queſt.*

Arguments you have had before; I ſhall only therefore point to two or three doors, where your enemy comes forth upon you, and ſurely the very ſight thereof, if thou beeſt loyal to Chriſt, will ſtir thee up to fall upon it. *Anſw.*

Firſt, pride diſcovers it ſelf in dwelling upon the thoughts of our gifts, with a ſecret kinde of content to ſee our own face, till at laſt we fall in love with it. We read of ſome whoſe *eyes are full of the adultereſſe, and cannot ceaſe from ſinne*; a proud heart is full of himſelf, his own abilityes caſt their ſhadow before him, they are in his eye wherever he goes, the great ſubject and theam of his thoughts is what he is, and what he hath above others, applauding himſelf as *Bernard* confeſſeth, that (when one would think he had little leiſure for ſuch thoughts) even in

preaching, pride would be whispering in his eare *Bene fecisti Bernarde*, O well done *Bernard*. Now have a care (Christian) of chatting with such company. Runne from such thoughts as from a Beare. If the devil can get thee to stand on this pinacle, while he presents thee with the glory of thy spiritual attainments and endowments for thee to gaze on them, thy weak head will soon turn round in pride: and therefore labour to keep the sense of thy own infirmities lively in thy soule to divert the temptation. As those who are subject to some kinde of fits, carry about them things proper for the disease, that when the fit is coming, (which oft is occasioned with a sweet perfume) they may use them for their help. Sweet sents are not more dangerous for them, than any thing that may applaud thee is to thy soul: Have a care therefore not onely of wearing such thoughts in thy own bosome but also of sitting by others, that bring the sweet sent of thy perfections to thee by their flattery.

2. 1 Sam. 17. 28. Secondly, this kinde of pride appears in a forwardnesse to expose it self to view. *Davids* brethren were mistaken in him indeed, but oft the pride and naughtinesse of the heart breaks out at this door. Christs carnal friends bid Christ shew himselfe; pride loves to climbe up, not as *Zaccheus*, to see Christ, but to be seen himself. *The fool* (*Solomon* tells us) *hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover it self*, Prov. 18. 2. Pride would be some body, and therefore comes abroad to court the multitude, whereas humility delights in privacie; as the leaves do cover and shade the fruits, that some hand must gently lift up them before they can see the fruit: so should humility and a holy modesty conceal the perfections of the soul, till a hand of Providence by some call invites them out, There is a pride in naked gifts as well as in naked breasts and backs: humility is a necessary veile to all other graces; and therefore first, Christian, look whenever thou comest forth to publike duty, that thou hast a call; it is obedience to be ready to answer, when God calls thee forth, but it's pride to run before God speaks. Secondly, when call'd earnestly implore divine strength against this enemy: shun not a duty for feare of pride, thou mayest shew it in the very seeming to escape it, but go in the strength of God against it; there is more hope of overcoming it by obedience than disobedience.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, in envying the gifts of others, when they ſeeme to blinde our own, that they are not ſo faire a proſpect as we deſire. This is a weed may grow too ranke in a good ſoile. *Aaron* and *Miriam* could not bear *Moſes* his honour, *Numb.* 12. 1. that was the buſineſſe, though they pick a quarrel with him about his wife, (becauſe an *Ethiopian*) as appears plainly, *verſe* 2. *Hath the Lord indeed ſpoken only by* Moſes? *hath he not ſpoken alſo by us*? They thought *Moſes* went away with too much of the honor, and did repine that God ſhould uſe him more than themſelves. And 'tis obſervable, that the luſting for fleſh broke out among the mixt multitude and baſer ſort of people, *Numb.* 11. 4, 5. but this of pride and envie took fire in the boſomes of the moſt eminent for place and Piety. O what need then have we, poor creatures, to watch our hearts when we ſee ſuch precious ſervants of God led into temptation? *The ſpirit that dwelleth in us luſteth to envie*, James 4. 5. Our corrupt nature is ever putting on to this ſin. 'Tis as hard to keep our hearts and this ſin aſunder, as it is to hinder two lovers from meeting together: Thatch is not more ready to be fired with very flaſh of lightening, than the heart to be kindled at the ſhining forth of any excelling gift or grace in another. It was one of the firſt windows that corrupt nature look't out at, a ſin that ſhed the the firſt blood; *Cains* envy hatcht *Abels* murder. Now if ever thou meaneſt to get the maſtery of this ſin; 3.

Firſt, call in help from heaven. No ſooner hath the Apoſtle ſet forth, how big and teeming full the heart of man is with envy, but he ſhews where a fountain of grace is infinitely exceeding that of luſt; *The ſpirit within us luſteth to envie, but he giveth more grace*, v. 5. And therefore ſit not down tamely under this ſin, it is not unconquerable. God can give thee more grace than thou haſt ſin, more humility than thou haſt pride. Be but ſo humble as cordially to beg his grace, and thou ſhalt not be ſo proud, as wickedly to envy his gifts or grace in others. 1.

Secondly, make this ſin as black and ugly as thou canſt poſſibly to thy thought, that when it is preſented to thee thou mayeſt abhor it the more, Indeed there needs no more than its own face, (wouldeſt thou look wiſhly on it) to make thee out of love with it. For firſt, this envying of others gifts, caſts great contempt upon God, and that more wayes than one. 2.

1. First, when thou envieſt the gifts of thy brethren, thou takeſt upon thee to teach God, what he ſhall give, and to whom; as if the great God ſhould take counſel or ask leave of thee before he diſpenſeth his gifts, and dareſt thou ſtand to thy own envious thoughts with this interpretation? ſuch a one thou findeſt Chriſt himſelf give, *Matth.* 20. 15. *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?* as if Chriſt had ſaid, what hath any to do to cavil at my diſpoſure of what is not theirs but mine to give?

2. Secondly, thou maligneſt the goodneſſe of God. It troubles thee, it ſeems, that God hath a heart to do good to any beſides thy ſelfe: thy eye is evil becauſe his is good. Wouldeſt not thou have God be good? you had as good ſpeak out and ſay, you would not have him God, he can aſſoon ceaſe to be God as to be good.

3. Thirdly, thou art an enemy to the glory of God, as thou defaceſt that which ſhould ſet it forth. Every gift is a ray of divine excellency; and as all the beams declare the glory of the Sunne, ſo all the gifts God imparts declare the glory of God: Now envy labours to deface and fully the repreſentations of God; it hath ever ſomething to diſparage the excellency of another withal. God ſhewed *Miriam* her ſin by her puniſhment, ſhe went to beſpatter *Moſes*, that ſhone ſo eminently with the gifts and graces of God, and God ſpits in her face, *Numb.* 12. yea, fills her all over with a noiſome ſcab. Doeſt thou cordially wiſh well to the honour of God? why then hangeſt thou thy head, and doeſt not rather rejoyce to ſee him glorified by the gifts of others? Could a *Heathen* take it ſo well, when himſelf was paſſed by, and others choſen to places of honour and government, that he ſaid, he was glad his City could finde ſo many more worthy than himſelf? and ſhall a Chriſtian repine that any are found fit to honour God beſides himſelf?

3. Secondly, thou wrongeſt thy brother, as thou ſinneſt againſt the law of love, which obligeth thee to rejoyce in his good as thy own, yea, to prefer him in honour before thy ſelfe. Thou canſt not love and envy the ſame perſon; envy is as contrary to love, as the hectical feavourish fire in the body is to the kindly heat of nature. *Charity envieth not*, 1 Corinth 13. How can it when it lives where it loves? and when thou ceaſeſt to love, thou beginneſt to hate and kill him, and doeſt not thou tremble,

to

to be found a murderer at laſt?

Thirdly, thou conſulteſt worſt of all for thy ſelf. God is out of thy reach, what thou ſpitteſt againſt heaven, thou art ſure to have fall on thy own face at laſt, and thy brother whom thou envieſt, God ſtands bound to defend him againſt thy envy, becauſe he is maligned for what he hath of God in him. Thus did God plead *Joſephs* cauſe againſt his envious brethren, and *Davids* againſt wicked *Saul*. Thy ſelfe only haſt real hurt. 3.

Firſt, thou depriveſt thy ſelf of what thou mighteſt reap from the gifts of others. That old ſaying is true, *Tolle invidiam, mea tua ſunt, & tua mea*: What thou haſt is mine, and what I have thine; when envy is gone. Whereas now, like the leach, (which they ſay draws out the worſt blood) thou ſuckeſt nothing, but what ſwells thy mind with diſcontent, and is after vomited out in ſtrife and contention. O what a ſad thing is it, that one ſhould go from a preciousSermon, a ſweet prayer, and bring nothing away but a grudge againſt the inſtrument God uſed; as we ſee in the Phariſees and others at Chriſts preaching. 1.

Secondly, thou robbeſt thy ſelf of the joy of thy life; *He that is cruel troubles his own fleſh*, Prov. 11. 17. The envious man doth it to purpoſe, he ſticks the honour and eſteeme of others as thornes in his own heart, he cannot think of them without pain and anguiſh, and he muſt needs pine that is ever in pain. 2.

Thirdly, thou throweſt thy ſelf into the mouth of temptation, thou needeſt give the Devil no greater advantage; it is a ſtock any ſin almoſt will grow upon. What will not the Patriarchs do, to rid their hands of *Joſeph* whom they envied? that very pride which made them diſdain the thought of bowing to his ſheaf, made them ſtoop far lower, even to debaſe themſelves as low as hell, and be the devils inſtruments to ſell their dear brother into ſlavery, which might have been worſe to him, (if God had not provided otherwiſe,) than if they had ſlain him on the place. What an impotent minde and cruel did *Saul* ſhew againſt *David*, when once envy had envenomed his heart? from that day which he heard *David* preferr'd in the womens Songs above himſelf, he could never get that ſound out of his head, but did ever after devote this innocent man to death in his 3.

thoughts,

thoughts, who had done him no other wrong, but in being an instrument to keep the crown on his head, by the hazard of his own life with *Goliah*. O it is a bloody sin. It is the wombe wherein a whole litter of other sins are formed. *Rom.* 1. 29. full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, &c. and therefore except you be resolved to bid the Devil welcome and his whole train, resist him in this, that comes before to take up quarters for the rest.

CHAP. X.

Of Pride of Grace.

SEcondly, pride of grace. This is another way Satan assaults the Christian. 'Tis true, grace cannot be proud, yet 'tis possible a Saint may be proud of his grace, there is nothing the Christian hath or doth, but this worme of pride will breed in it. The world we live in is corruptible, and all here is subject to putrifie, as things kept in a rafty muggish room, subject them to mould. It is not the nature of grace, but the salt of the Covenant keeps and preserves the purity of it; in heaven indeed we shall be safe. But how can a Saint be said to be proud of his grace? Then a soul is proud of his grace, when he trusts in his grace. Trust and confidence is an incommunicable flower of God a Crown as Soveraign Lord, even among men it goes along with royalty. Set up a King, and as such he expects you should give him this, as the undoubted Prerogative of his place, and therefore to seek protection from any other, is (as it were) to set up another King, *Judges* 19. 15. *If indeed you anoint me King over you, then come and put your trust under my shadow*; therefore when a soul puts his trust in any thing beside God, he sets up a Prince, a King, an Idol, to which he gives Gods glory away. Now it doth not make the sin lesse, that it is the grace of God we crown, than if it were a lust we crowned. 'Tis Idolatry to worship a holy Angel as well as a cursed Devil, to make our grace a god, as well as our belly our god, nay rather it addes to it, because that is now used to rob him of his glory, which

which ſhould have brought him in the greateſt revenue of glory; certainly the more treaſure you put into your ſervants hands, the greater wrong to you for him to run away with it. I doubt not but *David* could have borne it better to have ſeen a Philiſtine drive him from his throne than a ſonne, an *Abſalom*. But how can or may a Saint be ſaid to truſt in his grace?

Firſt, by truſting to the ſtrength of his grace.

Secondly, by truſting on the worth of his grace. Indeed a profeſſed truſt in grace, I conceive, cannot ſtand with grace: but there is an oblique kind of truſt, or that which by interpretation may ſavour of it. Satan is ſlie in his aſſaults.

SECT. 1.

Firſt, of the firſt, to truſt in the ſtrength of grace is to be proud of grace. This is oppoſed to that poverty of ſpirit ſo commended by our Saviour, *Matth.* 5. by which a man lives in the continual ſenſe of his ſpiritual beggery and nothingneſſe, and ſo hath his recourſe to Chriſt, as the poor to the rich mans door, knowing he hath nothing at home to maintain him. Such a one was *Paul*, not able to do any thing of himſelf; he is not aſhamed to let the world know that Chriſt carries his purſe for him. *Our ſufficiency is of God*, yea, after many years trading, this holy man ſees nothing he hath got, *Phil.* 3. 13. *I count not my ſelf to have apprehended*: he is ſtill preſſing forward; ask him how he lives, he'll tell you who keeps houſe for him; *I live, yet not I*, Gal. 2. 20. as ask a beggar where he hath his meat, cloathes, &c. he'll ſay, *I thank my good Maſter*; Now Satan chiefly labours to puffe the ſoul up with an over-weening conceit of his own ability, as the readieſt means to bring him into his ſnare; Satan knows 'tis Gods method to give his children into his hands, when once they grow proud and ſelf-confident: *Hezekiah* was left to a temptation, 2 *Chron.* 32. 31. *to try him*. Why? God had tried him to purpoſe a little before in an affliction; what needs this? O *Hezekiahs* heart was lift up after his affliction. It was time for God to let the tempter alone a little to foile him; probably now *Hezekiah* had high thoughts of his 1.

grace; O he would never do as he had done before, and God will let him see what a weak creature he is. *Peter* makes a whip for his own back in that bravado; *Though all should forsake thee, yet will not I.* Christ now in meer mercy must set Satan on him, to lay him on his back; that seeing the weakenesse of his faith, he might be dismounted from the height of his pride. All that I shall say from this, is to entreat thee (Christian) to have a care of this kinde of pride. You know what *Joab* said to *David*, when he perceived his heart lift up with the strength of his Kingdom, and therefore would have the people numbered, *The Lord God adde unto thy people, how many soever they be, a hundred fold; but why doth my Lord the King delight in this thing?* 2 Sam. 24. 3. The Lord adde to the strength of thy grace a hundred fold, but why delightest thou in this? why shouldest thou be lift up? is it not grace? shall the Groom be proud because he rides on his Masters horse? or the mud wall because the Sun shines on it? mayest thou not say of every dram of grace, as the young man of his hatchet, *Alas, Master it is borrowed?* nay, not only borrowed, but thou canst not use it without his skill and strength that lends it thee. O beware of this, let not those vain thoughts lodge in thee, lest thou enter into temptation. It is a breach a whole troop of sins may enter at, yea will, except speedily fill'd up.

1. First, it will make thee soon grow loose and negligent in thy duty. 'Tis sense of insufficiency keeps a soul at work, to pray and heare, as want in the house and hutch holds up the market, no man comes thither to buy what he hath at home. *Up*, saith *Jacob, go down to Egypt for corne, that we live and not dye.* Thus saith the needy Christian, Up soul to thy God, thy faith is weak, thy patience almost spent, ply thee to the throne of grace, go with thy homer to the Ordinances, and get some supplyes. Now a soul conceited of his store, hath another song; *Soul, take thine ease, thou art richly laid in for many dayes.* Let the doubting soul pray, thy faith is strong; let the weak lye at the breast, thou art well grown up; nay, 'tis well if it goes not further to a despising of Ordinances, except they have some more courtly fare than ordinary: such a passe were the *Corinthians* come to, 1 *Cor.* 4. 8. *Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye reign like Kings without us.* I pray observe how he layes the accent

cent on the particle *now*; now ye are rich, as if he had ſaid, I knew the time, if *Paul* had been come to town, and newes ſpread abroad in the City that *Paul* was to preach, you would have flockt to hear him, and bleſſed God for the ſeaſon, but then you were poor and empty; now ye are full, you have got to a higher attainment; *Paul* is a plain fellow now, he may carry his cheere to a hungry people if he will, we are well apaid. And when once the heart is come to this, 'tis eaſie to judge what will follow.

Secondly, this truſting to the ſtrength of grace will make the ſoul bold and venturous. The humble Chriſtian is the wary Chriſtian, he knows his weakneſſe, and this makes him afraid. I have a weak head, ſaith he, I may be ſoon diſputed into an errour and hereſie, and therefore I dare not come where ſuch ſtuffe is broach't, leſt my weak head ſhould be intoxicated: the confident man he'll ſip of every cup, he feares none; no, he is ſtabliſh't in the truth, a whole team of hereticks ſhall not draw him aſide. I have a vain light heart, ſaith the humble ſoul; I dare not come among wicked debauch't company, leſt I ſhould at laſt bring the naughty man home with me: but one truſting to the ſtrength of his grace, dares venture into the devils quarters. Thus *Peter* into the rout of Chriſts enemyes, and how he came off you know; there his faith had been ſlain on the place, had not Chriſt ſounded a retreat, by the ſeaſonable look of love he gave him. Indeed I have read of ſome bragging Philoſophers, who did not think it enough to be temperate, except they had the object for intemperance preſent; and therefore they would go into Taverns and Whore-houſes, as if they meant to beat the devil on his own ground; but the Chriſtian knows an enemy nearer than ſo, which they were ignorant of; and that he need not go over his own threſhold to challenge the devil. He hath luſt in his boſome that will be hard enough for him all his dayes, without giving it the vantage ground. Chriſtian, I know no ſin, but thou mayeſt be left to commit it, except one. It was a bold ſpeech of him, and yet a good man (as I have heard,) If *Clapham* dye of the plague, ſay *Clapham* had no faith, and this made him boldly go among the infected. If a Chriſtian, thou ſhalt not dye of ſpiritual plagues, yet ſuch may have the plague-ſores of groſſe ſins running on them for a time, and is not this ſad e- 2.

nough ? therefore walk humbly with thy God.

3. Thirdly, this high conceit of the ſtrength of thy grace will make thee cruel and churliſh to thy weak brethren in their infirmities, a ſin that leaſt becomes a Saint, *Gal.6.1. If any one be overtaken, you that be ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch a one with meekneſſe*; but how ſhall a ſoul get ſuch a meek ſpirit? It follows, *conſidering thy ſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted.* What makes men hard to the poor ? they think they ſhall never be ſo themſelves. Why are many ſo ſharp in their cenſures, but becauſe they truſt too much to their grace, as if they could never fall ? O you are in the body, and the body of ſin in you, therefore feare. *Bernard* uſed to ſay, when he heard any ſcandalous ſin of a Profeſſour ; *Hodie illi, cras mihi.* He fell to day, I may ſtumble to-morrow.

SECT. 2.

2. The ſecond way a ſoul may be proud of his grace, is by reſting on it for his acceptance with God. The Scripture calls inherent grace *our own righteouſneſſe*, (though God indeed be the efficient of it) and oppoſeth it to the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, which alone is called *the Righteouſneſſe of God*, *Rom.* 10. 1. Now to reſt on any grace inherent, is to exalt our own righteouſneſſe above the righteouſneſſe of God ; and what pride will this amount to ? If this were ſo, then a Saint when he comes to heaven might ſay, This is Heaven which I have built, my grace hath purchaſed ; and thus the God of Heaven ſhould become tenant to his creature in Heaven. No, God hath caſt the order of our ſalvation into another method, of grace, but not of grace in us, but grace to us. Inherent grace hath its place and office to accompany ſalvation, *Heb.6.9.* but not procure it. This is Chriſts work, not graces. When *Iſrael* waited on the Lord at Mount *Sinai*, they had their bounds, not a man muſt come up beſides *Moſes* to treat with God, no, not touch the Mount leſt they die: thus all the graces of the Spirit wait on God, but none come up to challenge any acceptance of God beſides faith, which is a grace that preſents the ſoul not in its own garments. But you will

will ſay, what needs all this? where is the man that truſts in his grace? Alas, where is the Chriſtian that doth fully ſtand clear, and freely come off his own righteouſneſſe? he is a rare Pilot indeed, that can ſteere his faith in ſo direct a courſe, as not now and then to knock upon this duty, and run on ground upon that grace. *Abraham* went in to *Hagar*; and the children of *Abrahams* faith are not perfectly dead to the law, and may be found ſometimes in *Hagars* armes, witneſſe the fluxe and refluxe of our faith, according to the various aſpect of our obedience: when this ſeems full, then our faith is at a ſpring-tide, and covers all the mountains of our fears; but let it ſeem to wain in any ſervice or duty, then the *Jordan* of our faith flyes back, and leaves the ſoul naked. The devils ſpight is at Chriſt, and therefore ſince he could not hinder his landing, which he endeavoured all he could, nor work his will on his perſon when he was come; he goes now in a more refined way to darken the glory of his ſufferings, and the ſufficiency of his righteouſneſſe, by blending ours with his; this doctrine of Juſtification by faith, hath had more works and batteries made againſt it, than any other in the Scripture. Indeed many other errours were but his fly approaches to get nearer to under-mine this; and laſtly, when he cannot hide this truth, (which now ſhines in the Church like the Sun in its ſtrength) then he labours to hinder the practical improvement of it, that we (if he can help it) ſhall not live up to our own principles, making us at the ſame time, that in our judgement we profeſſe acceptance only through Chriſt, in our practice confute our ſelves. Now there is a double pride in the ſoul he makes uſe of for this end, the one I may call a mannerly pride, the other a ſelf-applauding pride.

Firſt, a mannerly pride, which comes forth in the habit and guiſe of humility, and that diſcovers it ſelfe, either at the ſouls firſt coming to Chriſt, and keeps him from cloſing with the promiſe, or afterward in the daily courſe of a Chriſtians walking with God, which keeps him from comfortable living on Chriſt. 1.

Firſt, when a poor ſoul is ſtaved off the promiſe by the ſenſe of his own unworthineſſe and great unrighteouſneſſe; tell him of a pardon, alas, he is ſo wrapt up with the thoughts of his own vileneſſe, that you cannot faſten it upon him. What, will God e-

ver take ſuch a toad as he is into his boſome, diſcount ſo many great abominations at once, and receive him into his favour, that hath been ſo long in rebellious armes againſt him? he cannot beleeve it, no, though he hears what Chriſt hath done and ſuffered for ſinne, he refuſeth to be comforted. Little doth the ſoul think what a bitter root ſuch thoughts ſpring from, thou thinkeſt thou doeſt well thus to declaim againſt thy ſelf, and aggravate thy ſinnes; indeed thou canſt not paint them black enough, or entertain too low and baſe thoughts of thy ſelf for them: But what wrong hath God and Chriſt done thee, that thou ſhouldeſt ſo unworthily reflect upon the mercy of the one, and merit of the other? Mayeſt thou not do this, and be tender of the good Name of God alſo? Is there no way to ſhew thy ſenſe of thy ſin, except thou aſperſe thy Saviour? Canſt thou not charge thy ſelf, but thou muſt condemne God, and put Chriſt and his blood to ſhame before Satan, who triumphs more in this than all thy other ſinnes? In a word, though thou like a wretch haſt undone thy ſelf, and damned thy ſoul by thy ſinnes, yet art thou not willing God ſhould have the glory of pardoning them, and Chriſt the honour of procuring the ſame? or art thou like him in the Goſpel, *Luke* 16. 3. *who could not dig, and to beg was aſhamed.* Thou canſt not earne heaven by thy own righteouſneſſe, and is thy ſpirit ſo ſtout that thou wilt not beg it for Chriſts ſake, yea, take it at Gods hands, who in the Goſpel comes a begging to thee, and beſeecheth thee to be reconciled to him? Ah ſoul, who would ever have thought there could have lien ſuch pride under ſuch a modeſt veile? and yet none like it. 'Tis horrible pride for a beggar to ſtarve, rather than take an almes at a rich mans hands: a malefactour rather to chooſe his halter than a pardon from his gracious Princes hand: but here is one infinitely ſurpaſſing both; a ſoul pining and periſhing in ſin, and yet rejecting the mercy of God, and the helping hand of Chriſt to ſave him. Though *Abigail* did not think her ſelf worthy to be *Davids* wife, yet ſhe thought *David* was worthy of her, and therefore ſhe humbly accepted his offer, and makes haſte to go with the meſſengers: That's the ſweet frame of heart indeed, to lie low in the ſenſe of your own vileneſſe, yet to believe; to renounce all conceit of worthineſſe in our ſelves, yet not therefore to renounce all hope of mercy, but the more

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speedily to make haste to Christ that wooes us. All the pride and unmannerlinesse lies in making Christ stay for us, who bids his messengers invite poor sinners to come and tell them *all things are ready*. But may be thou wilt say still, it is not pride that keeps thee off, but thou canst not believe that ever God will entertain such as thou art. Truly, thou mendest the matter but little with this, either thou keepest some lust in thy heart, which thou wilt not part with to obtain the benefit of the promise, and then thou art a notorious hypocrite, who under such an out-cry for thy sins, canst drive a secret trade with hell at the same time; or if not so, thou dost discover the more pride in that thou darest stand out, when thou hast nothing to oppose against the many plaine and clear promises of the Gospel, but thy peremptory unbelief. God bids the wicked forsake his wayes, and turn to him, and he will abundantly pardon him; but thou sayest thou canst not believe this for thy own self. Now who speaks the truth? One of you two must be the liar, either thou must take it with shame to thy self, for what thou hast said against God and his promise, (and that is thy best course,) or thou must proudly, yea, blasphemously cast it upon God, as every unbeliever doth, 1 *John* 5.10. Nay, thou makest him forsworn for God, to give poor sinners the greater security in flying for refuge to Christ, who is that *hope set* before them, *Heb.* 6. 17, 18. hath sworn they should have strong consolation: *O beatos quorum causâ Deus jurat! O miserimus si nec juranti credimus.* Tertul. de pœnit. O happy we, for whose sake God puts himself under an oath; but O miserable we, who will not believe God, no; not when he swears!

Secondly, when the soul hath shot the great gulfe, and got into a state of peace and life by closing with Christ, yet this mannerly pride Satan makes use of in the Christians daily course of duty and obedience, to disturb him and hinder his peace and comfort. O how unchearfully, yea, joylesly do many precious souls passe their dayes! If you enquire what is the cause, you shall finde all their joy runs out at the crannies of their imperfect duties and weak graces; they cannot pray as they would, and walk as they desire with evennesse and constancy; they see how short they fall of the holy rule in the Word, and the pattterne which others more eminent in grace do set before them, and this

though

though it doth not make them throw the Promises away, and quite renounce all hope in Christ, yet it begets many sad feares and suspitions, yea, makes them sit at the feast Christ hath provided, and not know whether they may eat or not. In a word, as it robs them of their joy, so Christ of that glory which he should receive from their rejoycing in him. I do not say, (Christian) thou oughtest not to mourn for those defects thou findest in thy graces and duties, nay, thou couldst not approve thy self to be sincere, if thou didst not. A gracious heart, seeing how far short his renewed state (for the present) falls of mans primitive holinesse by Creation, cannot but weep and mourn, (as the Jewes to behold the second Temple;) yet (Christian even while the tears are in thy eyes for thy imperfect graces, (for a soul riseth with his grave-cloathes on) thou shouldest rejoyce, yea, triumph over all these thy defects by faith in Christ, *in whom thou art compleat*, Col. 1. 10. while imperfect in thy selfe. Christs presence in the second Temple, (which the first had not) made it (though comparatively mean) more glorious than the first, *Hag.* 2. 9. how much more doth his presence in this spiritual Temple of a gracious heart, imputing his righteousnesse to cover all its uncomelinesse, make the soul glorious above man at first? This is a garment for which (as Christ saith of the lillie) we neither spin nor toile; yet *Adam* in all his created royalty was not so clad, as the weakest believer is with this on his soul. Now, Christian, consider well what thou doest, while thou sittest languishing under the sense of thy own weaknesses, and refusest to rejoyce in Christ, and live comfortably on the sweet priviledges thou art interessed in by thy marriage to him. Doest thou not bewray some of this spiritual pride working in thee? O, if thou couldest pray without wandering, walk without limping, believe without wavering, then thou couldest rejoyce and walk chearfully. It seems, soul, thou stayest to bring the ground of thy comfort with thee, and not to receive it purely from Christ. O how much better were it if thou wouldest say with *David*: *Though my house*, my heart, *be not so with God, yet he hath made with me a Covenant ordered in all things and sure*; and this is all my desire, all my confidence; Christ I oppose to all my sins, Christ to all wants, he is my all in all, and all above all. Indeed all those complaints of our wants and weaknesses,

nesses, so far as they withdraw our hearts from relying chearfully on Christ, they are but the language of pride hankering after the Covenant of Works. O 'tis hard to forget our mother-tongue, which is so natural to us, labour therefore to be sensible of it, how grievous it is to the Spirit of Christ. What would a husband say, if his wife instead of expressing her love to him, and delight in him, should day and night do nothing but weep, and cry to think of her former husband that is dead? The Law (as a Covenant) and Christ are compared to two husbands, *Rom.* 7. 4. *Ye are become dead to the Law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead.* Now thy sorrow for the defect of thy own righteousness, when it hinders thy rejoycing in Christ, is but a whining after thy other husband, and this Christ cannot but take unkindely, that thou art not as well pleased to lie in the bosome of Christ, and have thy happiness from him as with your old husband the Law.

Secondly, a self-applauding pride, when the heart is secretly lift up, so as to promise it self acceptation at Gods hands, for any duty or act of obedience it performes, and doth not when most assisted go out of his own actings, to lay the weight of his expectation entirely upon Christ; every such glance of the souls eye is adulterous, yea, idolatrous. If thy heart, Christian, at any time be secretly enticed, (as *Job* saith of another kind of idolatry) or thy mouth doth kisse thy hand, that is, dote so far on thy own duties or righteousness, as to give them this inward worship of thy confidence and trust, this is a great iniquity indeed; for in this thou denyest the God that is above, who hath determined thy faith to another object. Thou comest to open heaven-gate with the old key, when God hath set on a new lock. Dost thou not acknowledge that thy first entrance into thy justified state was of pure mercy? thou wert *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*, Rom. 7. 24. And whom art thou beholden to, now thou art reconciled for thy further acceptance in every duty or holy action? to thy duty, thy obedience, thy self, or Christ? The same Apostle will tell you, *Rom.* 5. 2. *By whom we have accesse by faith into this grace wherein we stand.* If Christ should not lead thee in and all thou doest, thou art sure to finde

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the door shut upon thee: there is no more place for desert now thou art gracious, than when thou wert graceless: *Rom.* 1.17. *The righteousnesse of God is revealed from faith to faith, for the just shall live by faith.* We are not only made alive by Christ, but we live by Christ; faith sucks in continual pardoning, assisting, comforting mercy from him, as the lungs suck in the aire. Heaven-way is paved with grace and mercy to the end.

Use Be exhorted above all, to watch against this play of Satan, beware thou restest not in thy own righteousnesse; thou standest under a tottering wall, the very cracks thou seest in thy graces and duties, when best, bid thee stand off, except thou wouldest have them fall on thy head; the greatest stop to heaven, is out of our own doors, over our own threshold. It hath cost many a man his life when his house on fire, a grippleness to save some of the stuffe, which venturing among the flames to preserve, they have perished themselves; more have lost their souls by thinking to carry some of their own stuffe with them to heaven. Such a good work or duty, while they, like lingring *Lot*, have been loath to leave in point of confidence, have themselves perish't. O Sirs, come out, come out, leave what is your own in the fire, flie to Christ naked, he hath cloathing for you better than your own: poor to Christ, and he hath gold, not like thine, which will consume and be found drossy in the fire, but such as hath in the fiery trial past in Gods righteous judgment for pure and full weight; you cannot be found in two places at once; choose whether you will be found in your own righteousnesse, or in Christs. Those who have had more to shew than thy selfe, have thrown away all, and gone a begging to Christ. Reade *Pauls* Inventory, *Phil.* 3. what he had, what he did, yet all drosse and losse: give him Christ, and take the rest who will. So *Job*, as holy a man as trod on earth, (God himself being witnesse) yet saith; *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my own soul, I would despise my life.* Job 9.21. He had acknowledged his imperfection before, now he makes a supposition, (indeed *quod non est supponendum*:) If I were perfect, yet would I not know my own soul; I would not entertain any such thoughts as should puffe me up into such a confidence of my holinesse, as to make it my plea with God, like to our common phrase; We say, Such a one hath excellent parts, but he knows it, that is, he is proud of it.

Take

Take heed of knowing thy own grace in this sense, thou canst not give a greater wound both to thy grace and comfort than by thus priding thy self in it.

SECT. 3.

First, thy grace cannot thrive so long as thou thus restest on it. 1.
A legal spirit is no friend to grace, nay, a bitter enemy against it, as appeared by the Pharisees in Christs time. Grace comes not by the Law, but by Christ; thou mayest stand long enough by it, before thou getteſt any life of grace into thy soule, or further life into thy grace. If thou wouldest have this, thou must set thy self under Christs wings by faith; from his Spirit in the Gospel alone, comes this kindly natural heat to hatch thy soul to the life of holinesse, and increase what thou hast, and thou canst not come under Christs wings, till thou comest from under the shadow of the other, by renouncing all expectation from thy own works and services. You know *Reubens* curse, that he should not excel, because he went up into his fathers bed; when other tribes encreased, he stood at a little number. By trusting in thy own works thou doest worse by Christ, and shalt thou excel in grace? Perhaps some of you have been long Professours, and yet come to little growth in love to God, humility, heavenly-mindedness, mortification, and 'tis worth the digging to see what lies at the root of your Profession, whether there be not a legal principle that hath too much acted you. Have you not thought to carry all with God from your duties and services, and too much laid up your hopes in your own actings? Alas, this is as so much dead earth, which must be thrown out, and Gospel-principles laid in the room thereof; try but this course, and see whether the spring of thy grace will not come on apace. *David* gives an account how he came to stand and flourish, when some that were rich and mighty, on a sudden withered and came to nothing. *Lo*, (saith he) *this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches. But I am like a green olive-tree in the House of God; I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever*, Psal. 52. 7, 8. While others trust in the riches of their own righteousnesse and services, and make not Christ

their strength, do thou renounce all, and trust in the mercy of God in Christ, and thou shalt be like a green olive when they fade and wither.

Secondly, Christian, you will not thrive in true comfort so long as you rest in any inherent work of grace, and do not stand clear of your own actings and righteousnesse. Gospel-comfort springs from a Gospel-root, which is Christ, *Phil.* 3. 3. *We are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.* Now a soul that rests on any holinesse in himself; he grafts his comfort upon himself, not Christ; he sucks his own breast, not Christs; and so makes Christ a dry nurse: and what comfort can grow on that dry tree? The Spirit is our Comforter as well as our Teacher and Counsellour. Now as the Spirit when he teacheth comes not with any new or strange truth, but takes of Christs own; (what he findes in the Word) so where he comforts, he takes of Christs own, his righteousnesse, not our own: Christ is the matter and ground of his comfort: all cordials are but Christ distill'd, and made up in several promises: his acting, not ours; his suffering, not ours; his holinesse, not ours; he doth not say, Soul, rejoyce, thou art holy; but, Soul, triumph, Christ is righteous, and is *the Lord thy righteousnesse*; Not, Soul, thou prayest sweetly, feare not; but thou hast an Advocate with the Father, Christ the righteous: so that the first step to the receiving of comfort from the Spirit, is to send away all Comforters of our own. As in learning of the Spirit, he that will be taught by him, must first become a fool, (that is, no way lean to his own understanding,) so he that would be comforted, must first be emptied of all self-supports, must not lean to his own comforts. As a Physician first bids his Patient cast off all others he hath tampered with, he asks what Physick he hath had from them, takes off their plaisters, and throws away their Physick, and goes about the work *de novo*: So the Spirit when he comes to comfort a poor soul; First, perswades the soul to send away all its old Physicians. O, saith the soul, I have been in the hand of such a duty, such a course of obedience, and have thought sure now I shall be well, and have comfort now I do this duty, set upon such a holy course. Well, saith the Spirit, if you will have me do any thing, these must all be dismist

diſmiſt in point of confidence. Now, and not till now, is the ſoul a ſubject fit to receive the Spirits comforts. And therefore, friends, as you love your inward peace, beware what veſſel you draw your comfort from. Grace is finite, and ſo cannot afford much. 'Tis leaking, and ſo cannot hold long; thou drinkeſt in a riven diſh, that haſt thy comfort from thy grace. 'Tis mixt, and ſo weak; and weak grace cannot give ſtrong conſolation, and ſuch thou needeſt, eſpecially in ſtrong conflicts; Nay laſtly, thy comfort which thou draweſt from it is ſtollen, thou doeſt not come honeſtly by it, and ſtollen comforts will not thrive with thee. Oh, what folly is it for the childe to play the thief for that which he may have freely and more fully from his Father, who gives and reproacheth not? that comfort which thou wouldeſt filch out of thy own righteouſneſſe and duties; behold, it is laid up for thee in Chriſt, from whoſe fulneſſe thou mayeſt carry as much as thy faith can hold, and none to check thee, yea, the more thou improveſt Chriſt for thy comfort, the more heartily welcome; we are bid *to open our mouth wide, and he will fill it.*

CHAP. XI.

The third kinde of ſpiritual Pride, viz. *Pride of Priviledges.*

THe third kind of pride, (ſpiritual pride I mean) is pride of Priviledges, with which theſe wicked ſpirits labour to blow up the Chriſtian; to name three,

1. Firſt, when God calls a perſon to ſome eminent place, or uſeth him to do ſome ſpecial piece of ſervice.

2. Secondly, when God honours a Saint to ſuffer for his truth or cauſe.

3. Thirdly, when God flowes in with more than ordinary manifeſtations of his love, and fills the ſoul with joy and comfort. Theſe are priviledges not equally diſpenſed to all, and therefore where they are, Satan takes the advantage of aſſaulting ſuch with pride.

SECT.

SECT. 1.

1. First, when God calls a person to some eminent place, or useth him to do some special piece of service: Indeed it requires a great measure of grace to keep the heart low, when the man stands high. The Apostle speaking how a Minister of the Gospel should be qualified, 1 *Tim.* 3. 6. saith, he must not be a *Novice*, or a young Convert, *lest he should be lift up with pride, and fall into the condemnation of the devil*; as if he had said, this calling is honourable; if he be not well ballast with humility, a little gust from Satan will tople him into this sin; The Seventy that Christ first sent out to preach the Gospel, and prevailed so miraculously over Satan, even these while they trod on the Serpents head, he turn'd again, and had like to have flung them with pride, which our Saviour perceived, when they return'd in triumph, and told what great miracles they had wrought, and therefore he takes them off that glorying, lest it should degenerate into vain glory, and bids them *not rejoyce that devils were subject to them, but rather that their names were writ in Heaven.* As if he had said, It is not the honour of your calling, and successe of your Ministery will save you; there shall be some cast to the devils, who shall then say, *Lord, Lord, in thy Name we have cast out devils*; and therefore value not your selves by that, but rather evidence to your souls that ye are of mine elect ones, which will stand you more in stead at the great day than all this.

Luke 10. 12.

SECT. 2.

2. A second Priviledge is, when God honours a person to suffer for his truth, this is a great Priviledge. *Unto you it is given not only to believe, but to suffer for his sake.* God doth not use to give worthlesse gifts to his Saints, there is some preciousnesse in it which a carnal eye cannot see. Faith you will say is a great gift, but perseverance greater, without which faith would be little worth, and perseverance in suffering this above both honourable; This made *John Careless*, our English Martyr, (who though he dyed not at the stake, yet in prison for Christ,) say, Such an

an honour 'tis, as Angels are not permitted to have, therefore God forgive me mine unthankfulneſſe. Now when Satan cannot ſcare a ſoul from priſon, yet then he will labour to puffe him up in priſon; when he cannot make him pity himſelf, then he will flatter him till he prides in himſelfe; Affliction from God expoſeth to impatience, for God to pride; and therefore (Chriſtians) labour to fortifie your ſelves againſt this temptation of Satan, how ſoon you may be called to ſuffering work you know not, ſuch clouds oft are not long ariſing. Now to keep thy heart humble when thou art honoured to ſuffer for the truth; Conſider,

First, though thou doeſt not deſerve thoſe ſufferings at mans hand, (thou canſt and mayeſt in that regard glory in thy innocency, thou ſuffereſt not as an evil doer) yet thou canſt not but confeſſe it is a juſt affliction from God in regard of ſin in thee, and this methinks ſhould keep thee humble; the ſame ſuffering may be Martyrdome in regard of man, and yet a fatherly chaſtiſing for ſin in regard of God: none ſuffered without ſinne but Chriſt, and therefore none may glory in them but he; Chriſt in his own, we in his; *God forbid that I ſhould glory ſave in the Croſſe of Chriſt*, Gal. 6. This kept Mr. *Bradford* humble in his ſufferings for the truth, none more rejoyced in them and bleſſed God for them, yet none more humble under them than he; and what kept him in this humble frame? reade his godly letters, and you ſhall finde almoſt in all how he bemoans his ſins, and the ſins of the Proteſtants under the reign of King *Edward*: *It was time* (ſaith he) *for God to put his rod into the Papiſts hands, we were grown ſo proud, forma', unfruitful, yea, to loath and deſpiſe the means of grace, when we enjoyed the liberty thereof, and therefore God hath brought the wheele of perſecution on us.* As he look't at the honour to make him thankful, ſo to ſinne to keep him humble: 1.

Secondly, conſider who bears thee up, and carries thee through thy ſufferings for Chriſt: Is it thy grace or his that is ſufficient for ſuch a work? thy ſpirit or Chriſts, by which thou ſpeakeſt, when call'd to bear witneſſe to his truth? how comes it to paſſe thou art a ſufferer, and not a perſecutour; a confeſſour, and not a denier; yea, betrayer of Chriſt and his Goſpel? This thou oweſt for to God; he is not beholden to thee, that thou wilt part with eſtate, credit, or life it ſelf for his ſake. If thou hadſt 2.

a thousand lives, thou wouldest owe them all to him: but thou art beholden to God exceedingly, that he will call for these in this way, which has such an honour and reward attending it. He might have suffered thee to live in thy lusts, and at last to suffer the losse of all these for them. O how many dye at the Gallowes as Martyrs in the devils cause for felonies, rapes and murders! Or he might withdraw his grace, and leave thee to thy own cowardise and unbelief, and then thou wouldest soon shew thy self in thy colours. The stoutest Champions for Christ, have been taught how weak they are if Christ steps aside. Some that have given great testimony of their faith and resolution in Christs cause, even to come so near dying for his Name, as to give themselves to be bound to the stake, and fire to be kindled upon them, yet then their hearts have failed, as that holy man Mr. *Benbridge* in our *English Martyrol.* who thrust the faggots from him, and cryed out, *I recant, I recant.* Yet this man, when re-inforc't in his faith, and indued with power from above, was able within the space of a week after that sad foile, to dye at the stake cheerfully: *Qui pro nobis mortem semel vicit, semper in nobis vincit*: He that once overcame death for us, 'tis he that alwayes overcame death in us. And who should be thy Song, but he that is thy strength? applaud not thy self, but blesse him. 'Tis one of Gods Names, he is call'd the *glory of his peoples strength*, Psal. 89. 17. The more thou glorieſt in God that gives thee strength to suffer for him, the lesse thou wilt boast of thy self: A thankful heart and a proud cannot dwell together in one bosome.

Thirdly, consider what a foule blot pride gives to all thy sufferings, where it is not bewailed and resisted, it alters the case. The old saying is, that 'tis not the punishment, but the cause makes the Martyr; we may safely say further, it is not barely the cause, but the sincere frame of the heart in suffering for a good cause, that makes a man a Martyr in Gods sight. Though thou shouldest give thy body to be burnt, if thou hast not an humble heart of a sufferer for Christ, thou turnest Merchant for thy selfe. Thou denyest but one self to set up another, runnest the hazard of thy estate and life to gain some applause, may be, and reare up a monument to thy honour in the opinions of men; thou doest no more in this case than a souldier, who for a name of valour will venture

venture into the mouth of death and danger, only thou shewest thy pride under a religious disguise, but that helps it not, but makes it the worse. If thou wilt in thy sufferings be a sacrifice acceptable to God, thou must not only be ready to offer up thy life for his truth, but sacrifice thy pride also, or else thou mayest tumble out of one fire into another, suffer here from man, as a seeming champion for the Gospel, and in another world from God, for robbing him of his glory in thy sufferings.

SECT. 3.

A third priviledge is, when God flowes in with more then ordinary manifestations of his love, then the Christian is in danger of having his heart secretly lift up in pride. Indeed the genuine and natural effect, which such discoveryes of divine love have on a gracious soul, is to humble it. The sight of mercy encreaseth the sense of sin, and that sense dissolves the soul kindely into sorrow, as we see in *Magdalen*. The heart which possibly was hard and frozen in the shade, will give and thaw in the Sun-shine of love, and so long all pride is hid from the creatures eye. *Then* (saith God) *Ezek.* 36. 31. *ye shall remember your wayes, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath your selves in your own sight, &c.* And when shall this be, but when God would save them from all their uncleanesse, as appears? *ver.* 25. yet notwithstanding this, there remain such dregs of corruption unpurged out of the best, that Satan findes it not impossible, to make the manifestations of Gods love an occasion of pride to the Christian: and truely God lets us see our proneness to this sin in the short stay he makes, when he comes with any greater discoveryes of his love. The Comforter ('tis true) abides for ever in the Saints bosome; but his joyes they come, and are gone again quickly. They are as exceedings, with which he feasts the believer, but the cloth is soon drawn; and why so, but because we cannot bear them for our every day food? A short interview of heaven, and a vision of love now and then upon the mount of an ordinance or affliction, cheeres the spirit of drooping Christians, who, might they have leave to build Tabernacles there, and dwell under a constant shine of such manifestations,

3.

would be prone to forget themselves, and think they were Lords of their own comforts. If holy *Paul* was in danger of falling into this distemper of pride from his short rapture, to prevent which, God saw it needful to let him blood with a thorne in the flesh, would not our blood much more grow too rank, and we too crank and wanton: if we should feed long on such luscious food? And therefore, if ever (Christian) thou hadst need to watch, then is the time when comforts abound, and God dandles thee most on the knee of his love, when his face shines with clearest manifestations, lest this sin of pride (as a thief in the candle) should swaile out thy joy. To prevent which thou shouldest do well; First, to look that thou measurest not thy
n grace by thy comfort, lest so thou beest led into a false opinion, that thy grace is strong, because thy comforts are so. Satan will be ready to help forward such thoughts as a fit *medium* to lift thee up, and slacken thy care in duty for the future. Such discoveries do indeed bear witnesse to the truth of thy grace, but not to the degree and measure of it; the weak childe may be, yea, is oftner in the lap than the strong. Secondly, do not so much applaud thy self in thy present comfort, as labour to improve it for the glory of God. *Up and eat, saith the Angel to the Prophet, because the journey is too great for thee.* The manifestations of Gods love are to fit us for our work. It is one thing to rejoyce in the light of our comfort, and another to go forth in the power of the Spirit comforting us (as Gyants refreshed with this wine) to run our race of duty and obedience with more strength and alacrity. He shews his pride, that spends his time in telling his money meerly to see how rich he is; but he is wisdom, that layes out his money and trades with it. The boaster of his comforts will lose what he hath, when he that improves his comforts in a fuller trade of duty shall adde more to what he hath. Thirdly, remember thou dependest on God for the continuance of thy comfort. They are not the smiles thou hadst yesterday can make thee joyous to day, any more than the bread thou didst then eat can make thee strong without more; thou needest new discoveries for new comforts: let God hide his face, and thou wilt soon lose the sight, and forget the taste of what thou even now hadst. It is beyond our skill or power to preserve those impressions of joy, and comfortable apprehensions

henſions of Gods favour on our ſpirits, which ſometimes we finde; as Gods preſence brings thoſe, ſo when he goes he carries them away with him, as the ſetting Sunne doth the day. We would laugh heartily at him, who when the Sun ſhines in at his window, ſhould think by ſhutting that to impriſon the Sun-beams in his Chamber; and doeſt thou not ſhew as much folly, who thinkeſt becauſe thou now haſt comfort, thou therefore ſhalt never be in darkneſſe of ſpirit more? The beleevers comforts is like *Iſraels* Manna: 'tis not like our ordinary bread and proviſion; we buy at market, and lock up in our Cupboards where we can go to it when we will; no, it is rained as that was from heaven. Indeed God provided for them after this ſort to humble them, *Deut.* 8. 16. *Who fed thee in the wilderneſſe with Manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee.* It was not becauſe ſuch mean food, that God is ſaid to humble them; for it was delicious food; therefore call'd *Angels food*, Pſal. 78. 25. Such as if Angels did eate, might ſerve them. But the manner of the diſpenſing it, from hand to mouth, every day their portion and no more, ſo that God kept the key of their Cupboard, they ſtood to his immediate allowance; and thus God communicates our ſpiritual comforts for the ſame end to humble us. So much for this ſecond ſort of ſpiritual wickedneſſe.

I had thought to have inſtanced in ſome other, as hypocriſie, unbelief, mortality; but poſſibly the ſubject being general, what I have already ſaid may be thought but a digreſſion, and that too long.

I ſhall therefore conclude this branch of *ſpiritual wickedneſſe*, in a word to thoſe who are yet in a natural and unſanctified ſtate, which is to ſtir them up from what I have ſaid (concerning Satans aſſaulting beleevers with ſuch temptations;) to conſider ſeriouſly, how that Satans chief deſigne againſt them alſo lies in the ſame ſinnes. Theſe are the wickednesſes he labours to ingulph you in above all others. If ever you periſh, it will be by the hand of theſe ſins. 'Tis your ſeared conſcience, blind mind, and dedolent impenitent heart, will be your undoing if you miſcarry finally. Other ſins, the devil knowes, are preparatory to theſe, and therefore he drawes thee into them to bring thee into theſe. Two wayes they prepare a way to ſpiritual ſins; Firſt, as

they naturally dispose the sinner to them; 'tis the nature of sin to blinde the minde, stupifie the conscience, harden the heart, as is implied, *Heb.* 3. 13. *Lest your heart be hardned through the deceitfulnesse of sin.* As the feet of Travellers beat the high way hard, so does walking in carnal grosse sins the heart; they benumbe the conscience, so that in time the sinner loses his feeling, and can carry his lusts in his heart, (as Bedlams their pins in their very flesh) without pain and remorse. Secondly, as they do provoke God by a judiciary act to give them up to these sins, *Lam.* 3. 65. *Give them obstinacy of heart*, (so 'tis in the margin) *thy curse unto them*; and when the devil hath got sinners at this passe, then he hath them under lock and key. They are the fore-runners of damnation; if God leave thy heart hard and unbroken up, 'tis a sad signe he means not to sowe the seed of grace there. O sinners pray, (as he did request *Peter* for him) that none of these things may come upon you; which that they may not, take heed thou rejectest not the offers he makes to soften thee. Gods hardening is a consequent of, and a punishment for our hardening our own hearts. 'Tis most true what *Prosper* saith, *Potest homo invitus amittere temporalia, non nisi volens amittere spiritualia*: A man may lose temporals against his will, but not spirituals; God will harden none, damne none against their will.

CHAP. XII.

Sheweth what the Prize is, which beleevers wrestle against these Principalities Powers, and Spiritual wickednesses for;

In High Places.

SECT. 1.

THese words containe the last Branch in the description of our grand enemy, which have in them some ambiguity, the

Adjective

Adjective being only expreſt in the Original; ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις, that is, in heavenlies; the phraſe being defective, our Tranſlatours read it in high or heavenly places, as if the Apoſtle intended to ſet out the advantage of place, which this our enemy, by being above us hath of us. Indeed this way moſt Interpreters go, yet ſome both ancient and modern reade the words not in heavenly places, but *in heavenly things*, interpreting the Apoſtles mind to ſet out the matter about which, or prize for which we wreſtle with Principalities and Powers, *to be heavenly things*. Ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις, (ſaith *Oecumenius*) is as much as if the Apoſtle had ſaid, Ἡμῖν πάλη ὑπὲρ μικρῶν τινῶν, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις πραγμάτων· We wreſtle not for ſmall and trivial things, but for heavenly, yea, for heaven it ſelf, and our Adoption, as he goes on. The ſame way *Chryſoſtome* carries it, *in cœleſtibus, id eſt, pro cœleſtibus Dei.* And after him *Muſculus*, and other modern Writers. The reaſons which are given for this Interpretation are weighty.

Firſt, the word elſewhere Indefinitely ſet down, is taken for things, not places, *Heb.* 8. 5. nay, one obſerves this word to be uſed almoſt twenty times in the New Teſtament, and never for any aërial place, but alwayes for things truly heavenly and ſpiritual *; the word indeed properly ſignifies *ſupercelestial*, and if applied to places, would ſignifie that where the devil never came ſince his fall.

* See, Dr. *Gouge* on the place.

Laſtly, there ſeems no great argument to render Satan formidable by his being above us in place; 'tis ſome advantage indeed to men, to gain the hill, or be above their enemy in ſome place of ſtrength, but none at all to ſpirits; but now take it of things, and then it addes weight to all the other branches of the deſcription. We wreſtle with Principalities and Powers, and Spiritual wickedneſſe, and againſt all theſe, not for ſuch toyes and trifles as the earth affords, which are inconſiderable whether to keep or loſe; but for ſuch as heaven holds forth, ſuch an enemy, and ſuch a prize makes it matter of our greateſt care, how to manage the combate. The word thus opened, the note will be this:

SECT.

SECT. 2.

Doct. The chief prize for which we wrestle against Satan is heavenly. Or thus, Satans main designe is to spoile and plunder the Christian of all that is heavenly, Indeed all the Christian hath, or desires as a Christian is heavenly; the world is extrinsecal, both to his being and happinesse; it is a stranger to the Christian, and intermeddles not with his joy nor grief. Heap all the riches and honours of the world upon a man, they will not make him a Christian; heap them on a Christian, they will not make him a better Christian. Again, take them all away, let every bird have his feather, when stript and naked he will still be a Christian, and may be a better Christian. It was a notable speech of *Erasmus*, if spoken in earnest, and his wit were not too quick for his conscience; *Nihilo magis ambio opes & dignitates, quàm elumbis equus graves farcinas*: He said he desired wealth and honour no more than a feeble horse doth a heavy cloak-bag. And I think every Christian in his right temper would be of his minde. Satan should do the Saint little hurt, if he did bend his forces only or chiefly against his outward enjoyments; alas, the Christian doth not value them, or himself by them: this were as if one should think to hurt a man by beating of his clothes when he hath put them off. So far as the Spirit of grace prevails in the heart of a Saint, he hath put off the world in the desire of it, and joy in it; so that these blows are not much felt: and therefore they are his heavenly treasures, which are the booty Satan waits for.

SECT. 3.

1. First, the Christians nature is heavenly, borne from above; As Christ is the Lord from heaven, so all his off-spring are heavenly and holy: now Satans design is to debase and deflower this; 'tis the precious life of this new creature that he hunts for; he hath lost that beauty of holinesse which once shone so gloriously on his Angelical nature; and now like a true Apostate he endeavours to ruine that in the Christian which he hath lost him-

himself. The seeds of this war are sowen in the Christians nature; you are holy, that he cannot endure; *Miles feri faciem*, was *Cæsars* speech, when to fight with the Roman Citizens, he bade his souldiers strike at their face, these Citizens (said he) love their beauty, marre that and marre all. The soul is the face whereon Gods image is stamp't: holinesse is the beauty of this face, which makes us indeed like God, this Satan knows God loves, and the Saint is chary of; and therefore he labours to wound and disfigure this, that he may at once glory in the Christians shame, and poure contempt upon God in breaking his image; and is it not worth engaging limbe and life in battel against this enemy, who would rob us of that which makes us like God himself? Have you forgot the bloody Articles of peace that *Nahash* offered to the men of *Jabesh-Gilead?* no peace to be had, except they would let him thrust out their right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all *Israel*, which how it was entertained reade, 1 *Sam.* 11. 6. The face is not so deformed that hath lost its eye, as the soul is that loseth its holinesse; and no peace to be expected at Satans hands except he may deprive us of this: Methinks at the thought of this, the Spirit of the Lord should come upon the Christian, and his anger should be kindled much more against this cursed spirit, than *Sauls* and the men of *Israels* was against *Nahash*.

Secondly, the Christians trade is heavenly; the merchandize he deals for is of the growth of that heavenly Countrey, *Phil.* 3. 20. *Our conversation is in heaven.* Every mans conversation is suitable to his calling; he whose trade lies in the earth minds earthly things; and he whose trade is heavenly follows that close. *Every man minds his own business*, the Apostle tells us. You may possibly finde a Tradesman out of his shop now and then, but he is as a fish out of the water, never in his element till he be in his calling again. Thus when the Christian is about the world, and the worldling about heavenly matters, both are men out of their way; not right girt; till they get into their employment again. Now this heavenly trade is that which Satan doth in an especial manner labour to stop. Could the Christian enjoy but a free trade with heaven a few years without molestation, he would soon grow a rich man, too rich indeed for earth; but what with losses sustained by the hands of this Pyrate 2.

rate Satan, and also the wrong he receives by the treachery of some in his own bosome, (that like unfaithful servants hold correspondence with this robber) he is kept but low in this life, and much of his gaines are lost. Now the Christians heavenly trade lies either within doors, or abroad; he can be free in neither, Satan is at his heels in both.

1. First, within doors. This I may call his home-trade which is spent in secret between God and his own soul; here the Christian drives an unknown trade: he is at heaven and home again, richly laden in his thoughts with heavenly meditations before the world knows where he hath been. Every creature he sees is a text for his heart to raise some spiritual matter and observations from: Every Sermon he heares cuts him out work to make up and enlarge upon when he gets alone. Every Providence is as winde to his sailes, and sets his heart a moving in some heavenly affection or other, suitable to the occasion. One while he is wrap't up with joy in the consideration of mercy, another while melted into godly sorrow from the sense of his sins. Sometimes exalting God in his praises, anon abasing himself before God for his own vileneſſe. One while he is at the breast of the Covenant, milking out the consolations of the Promises; at another time working his heart into a holy awe and feare of the threatenings. Thus the Christian walks aloft, while the base worldling is licking the dust below. One of these heavenly pearles which the Christian trades for, is more worth than the worldling gets with all his sweat and travel in his whole life. The Christians feet stand where other mens heads are; he treads on the Moon, and is clothed with the Sun; he looks down on earthly men (as one from a high hill doth upon those that live in some fenne or moore) and sees them buried in a fog of carnal pleasures and profits, while he breaths in a pure heavenly aire, but yet not so high as to be free from all stormes and tempests; many a sad gust he hath from sinne and Satan without. What else mean those sad complaints and groans, which come from the children of God, that their hearts are so dead and dull, their thoughts so roving and unfixt in duty, yea, many times so wicked and filthy, that they dare hardly tell what they are, for feare of staining their own lips, and offending the eares of others by naming them? Surely, the

the Christian findes it in his heart to will and desire he could meditate, pray, heare, and live after another sort than this, doth he not? yes, I durst be his surety he doth. But so long as there is a devil tempts, and we continue within his walk, it will be thus more or lesse, as fast as we labour to clear the spring of our hearts, he will be labouring to royle or stop it again; so that we have two works to do at once, to performe a duty, and watch him that opposeth us, trowel and sword both in our hands. They had need work hard indeed, who have others continually endeavouring to pull down, as they are labouring to rear up the building.

Secondly, that part of the Christians trade, which lies abroad, is heavenly also. Take a Christian in his relations, calling, neighbourhood, he is a heavenly trader in all; the great businesse of his life is to be doing or receiving some good; that company is not for him that will neither give nor take this. What should a Merchant be where there is no buying nor selling? Every one labours (as his calling is) so seat himself where trade is quickest, and he is likest to have most takings. The Christian (where he may choose) takes such in relations near to himselfe, (husband, wife, servants) as may suite with his heavenly trade, and not such as will be a pull-back to him; he falls in with the holiest persons as his deerest acquaintance: if there be a Saint in the town where he lives, he'll finde him out, and this shall be the man he will consort with; and in his conversation with these and all else, his chief work is for heaven, his heavenly principle within inclines him to it. Now, this alarms hell. What not contented to go to heaven himselfe, but by his holy example, gracious speeches, sweet counsels, seasonable reproofs, will he be trading with others, and labour to carry them along with him also? This brings the Lyon fell and mad out of his den; such to be sure shall finde the devil in their way to oppose them. *I would have come*, (saith *Paul*) *but Satan hindred me.* He that will vouch God, and let it appear by the tenure of his conversation that he trades for him, shall have enemies enough if the devil can help him to such. 2.

Thirdly, the Christians hopes are all heavenly, he lots not upon any thing the world hath to give him. Indeed he would think himself the most miserable man of all others, if here were all 3.

he could make of his Religion. No, 'tis heaven and eternal life that he expects; and though he be so poor as not to be able to make a Will of a groat, yet he counts himself a greater heire, than if he were childe to the greatest Prince on earth. This inheritance he sees by faith, and can rejoyce in the hope of the glory which it will bring him. The masquery and cheating glory of the great ones of this world, moves him not to envy their fanciful pomp, but when on the dunghill himselfe, he can forget his own present sorrows to pity them in all their bravery, knowing that within a few dayes the crosse will be off his back, and the crowns off their heads together; their portion will be spent when he shall be to receive all his. These things entertain him with such joy that they will not suffer him to acknowledge himselfe miserable, when others think him and the devil tells him, he is such. This, this torments the very soul of the devil, to see the Christian under saile for heaven, fill'd with the sweet hope of his joyful entertainment when he comes there, and therefore he raiseth what stormes and tempests he can, either to hinder his arrival in that blessed Port, (which he most desires, and doth not wholly despair of) or at least to make it a troublesome winter-voyage, (such as *Pauls* was, in which they suffered so much losse,) and this indeed very often he obtains in such a degree, that by his violent impetuous temptations beating long upon the Christian, he makes him throw over much precious lading of his joyes and comforts; yea, sometimes he brings the soul through streſſe of temptation to think of quitting the ship, while for the present all hope of being saved seems to be taken away. Thus you see what we wrestle with devils for. We come to *Application.*

SECT. 4.

Use 1. This is a word of reproof to foure sorts of persons.

1. Firſt, to those that are so far from wrestling against Satan for this heavenly prize, that they resist the offer of it. In stead of taking heaven by force, they keep it off by force. How long hath the Lord been crying in our streets, *Repent, for the Kingdome of heaven is at hand?* how long have Gospel-offers rung in our ears?

and

and yet to this day many devil-deluded souls furiously drive on towards hell, and will not be perswaded back, who refuse to be called the children of God, and choose rather the devils bondage than the glorious liberty with which Christ would make them free, esteeming the pleasures of sin for a season greater treasures than the riches of heaven. 'Tis storied of *Cato* (who was *Cæsars* bitter enemy) that when he saw *Cæsar* prevail, rather than fall into his hand and stand to his mercy, he laid violent hands on himself, which *Cæsar* hearing of, passionately broke out into these words, *O Cato, cur invidisti mihi salutem tuam?* O *Cato*, why didst thou envy me the honour of saving thy life? And do not many walk as if they grudged Christ the honour of saving their souls? what other account can you give sinners of rejecting his grace? Are not heaven and happiness things desireable, and to be preferr'd before sinne and misery? Why then do you not embrace them? or are they the worse, because they come swimming to you in the blood of Christ? oh how ill must Christ take it to be thus used, when he comes on such a gracious ambassage? may he not say to thee as once he did to those officers sent to attach him, *Do you come out against me as a thief with swords and staves?* If he be a thief, 'tis only in this, that he would steal your sins from you, and leave heaven in the room: O, for the love of God think what you do, 'tis eternal life you put away from you, in doing of which, *you judge your selves unworthy of it*, Acts 13.46.

Secondly, it reproves those who are Satans instruments, to rob souls of what is heavenly. Among thieves there are some ye call *Setters*, who enquire where a booty is to be had, which when they have found, and know such a one travels with a charge about him, then they employ some other to rob him, and are themselves not seen in the business. The devil is the grand *Setter*, he observes the Christian how he walks, what place and company he frequents, what grace or heavenly treasure he carryes in his bosome; which when he hath done, he hath his instruments for the purpose to execute his designe. Thus he considered the admirable graces of *Job*, and casts about how he might best rob him of his heavenly treasure: and who but his wife and friends must do this for him? (well knowing that his tale would receive credit from their mouths.) O

2.

friends, ask your consciences, whether you have not done the devil some service of this kinde in your dayes. Possibly you have a childe or servant who once look't heaven-ward, but your brow-beating of them scared them back, and now (may be) they are as carnal as you would have them: or possibly thy wife before acquainted with thee, as full of life in the wayes of God, but since she hath been transplanted into thy cold soile, what by thy frothy speeches and unsavoury conversation, at best thy worldlinesse and formality, she is now both decayed in her graces, and a loser in her comforts. O man, what an enditement will be brought against thee for this at Gods bar? you would come off better, were it for robbing one of his money and jewels, then of his graces and comforts.

3. Thirdly, it reproves the woful negligence most shew in labouring for this heavenly prize. None but would be glad their souls might be saved at last; but where is the man or woman that makes it appear by their vigourous endeavour that they mean in earnest? what warlike preparation do they make against Satan, (who lyes between them and home)? where are their armes, where their skill to use them, their resolution to stand to them, and conscionable care to exercise themselves daily in the use of them? Alas, this is a rarity indeed, not to be found in every house, where the Profession of Religion is hang'd out at the door; if woulding and wishing will bring them to heaven, then they may come thither; but as for this wrestling and fighting, this making Religion our businesse, they are as far from these as at last they are like to be from heaven. They are of his minde in *Tully*, who in a Summers day, as he lay lazing himself on the grasse, would say, *O utinam hoc esset laborare!* O that this were to work, that I could lye here and do my day-labour! Thus many melt and waste their lives in sloth, and say in their hearts, O that this were the way to heaven! but will use no means to furnish themselves with grace for such an enterprise; I have read of a great Prince in *Germany*, invaded by a more potent enemy than himself, yet from his friends and Allies, (who flock't in to his help) he soon had a goodly Army, but had no money (as he said) to pay them, but the truth is, he was loth to part with it, for which some in discontent went away, others did not vigorously attend his businesse, and so he was

soon

soon beaten out of his Kingdome; and his coffers (when his Palace was rifled) were found thrack't with treasure. Thus he was ruined, as some sick men die, because unwilling to be at cost to pay the Physician. It will adde to the misery of damned souls, when they shall have leisure enough to consider what they have lost in losing God, to remember what means, offers and talents they once had, towards the obtaining of everlasting life, but had not a heart to use them.

Fourthly, it reproves those who make a great busle and noise in Religion, who are forward in Profession, very busie to meddle with the strictest duties, as if heaven had monopolized their whole hearts; but like the Eagle, when they tower highest, their prey is below, where their eye is also. Such a generation there ever was and will be, that mingle themselves with the Saints of God, who pretend heaven, and have their outward garb faced and fringed (as it were) with heavenly speeches and duties, while their hearts are lined with hypocrisie, whereby they deceive others, and most of all themselves; such may be the worlds Saints, but devils in Christs account. *Have not I chosen twelve, one of you is a devil?* And truly of all devils none so bad as the professing devil, the preaching, praying devil. O Sirs, be plain-hearted; Religion is as tender as your eye, it will not be jested with; Remember the vengeance which fell on *Belshazzar*, while he carowsed in the bowles of the Sanctuary. Religion and the duties of it are consecrated things, not made for thee to drink thy lusts out of. God hath remarkably appeared in discovering and confounding such as have prostituted sacred things to worldly ends. *Jezabel* fasts and prayes the better, to devoure *Naboths* vineyard, but was devoured by it. *Absalom* was as sick till he had ravish't his fathers Crown, as his brother *Amnon* till he had done the like to his sister, and to hide his treason he puts on a religious cloak, and therefore begs leave to go and pay his vow in *Hebron*, when he had another game in chase, and did he not fall by the hand of his hypocrisie? of all men their judgment is indorst with most speed, who silver over worldly or wicked enterprises with heavenly semblances; of this gang were those, 2 *Pet.* 2. 3. concerning whom the Apostle saith, *Their damnation slumbers not*; and those, *Ezek.* 14. 7, 8. to whom God saith, *I the Lord will answer him by my selfe*, and 4.

and I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign, and a Proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

Use 2. Secondly, try whether they be heavenly things or earthly thou chiefly pursuest; certainly friends, we need not be so ignorant of our soules state and affairs, did we oftner converse with our thoughts, and observe the haunts of our hearts; we soon can tell what dish pleaseth our palate best: and may you not tell whether heaven or earth be the most savoury meat to your souls? and if you should ask how you might know whether heaven be the prize you chiefly desire, *I* would put you only upon this double trial.

1. First, art thou uniforme in thy pursuit? Doest thou contend for heaven, and that which leads to heaven also? Earthly things God is pleased to retaile; all have some, none have all; but in heavenly treasure he will not break the whole piece, and cut it into remnants. If thou wilt have heaven, thou must have Christ; if Christ, thou must like his service as well as his sacrifice; no holinesse, no happinesse. If God would cut off so much as would serve mens turnes, he might have customers enough. *Balaam* himself likes one end of the piece, *he would dye like a righteous man*, though live like a wizzard as he was; no; God will not deal with such pedling Merchants; that man alone is for God, and God for him, who will come roundly up to Gods offer, and take all off his hands. One fitly compares holinesse and happinesse to those two sisters, *Leah* and *Rachel*. Happinesse like *Rachel* seems the fairer, (even a carnal heart may fall in love with that,) but holinesse like *Leah* is the elder and beautiful also, though in this life it appears with some disadvantage, her eyes being blear'd with tears of repentance, and her face furrowed with the works of mortification; *but this is the Law of that heavenly Countrey*, that the younger Sister must not be bestowed before the elder. We cannot enjoy fair *Rachel*, Heaven and Happinesse, except first we embrace tender-eyed *Leah*, Holinesse with all her severe duties of repentance and mortification. Now Sirs, how like you this method? Art thou content to marry Christ and his grace, and then (serving an hard Apprenticeship in temptations both of prosperity and adversity, enduring the heat of the one, and the cold of the other) to wait

wait till at last the other be given into thy bosome?

Secondly, if indeed heaven and heavenly things be the prize thou wrestlest for, thou wilt discover a heavenly deportment of heart, even in earthly things; wherever you meet a Christian, he is going to Heaven; Heaven is at the bottome of his lowest actions. Now observe thy heart in three particulars; In getting, in using, and in keeping earthly things, whether it be after a heavenly manner. 2.

First, *In getting earthly things.* If Heaven be thy chief prize, then thou wilt be ruled by a heavenly Law in the gathering of these. Take a carnal wretch, and what his heart is set on, he will have, though it be by hook or crook. A lye fits *Gehazi*'s mouth well enough, so he may fill his pockets by it. *Jezabel* dares mock God, and murder an innocent man for an acre or two of ground. *Absalom regnandi causâ* what will he not do? Gods fence is too low to keep a graceless heart in bounds, when the game is before him; but a soul that hath heaven in its eye is ruled by heavens Law: he dares not step out of heavens road to take up a Crown, as we see in *Davids* carriage towards *Saul*. Indeed in so doing he should crosse himself in his own grand design, which is the glory of God, and the happinesse of his own soul in enjoying of him; upon these very termes the servants of God have refused to be rich and great in the world, when either of these lay at stake; *Moses* threw his Court-preferment at his heels, *refusing to be call'd the son of Pharaohs daughter*. *Abraham* scorned to be made rich by the King of *Sodom*, *Gen.* 14. 22. that he might avoid the suspicion of covetousnesse and self-seeking; it shall not be said another day that he came to enrich himself with the spoil, more than to rescue his kinsmen. *Nehemiah* would not take the taxe and tribute to maintaine his state, when he knew they were a poor peeled people, *because of the fear of the Lord*. Doest thou walk by this rule? wouldst thou gather no more estate or honour than thou mayest have with Gods leave, and will stand with thy hopes of heaven? 1.

Secondly, doest thou discover a heavenly Spirit in using these things? 2.

First, the Saint improves his earthly things for an heavenly end; where layest thou up thy treasure? doest thou bestow it on thy voluptuous paunch, thy hawks and thy hounds, or lockest thou

thou it up in the bosome of Christs poor members? what use makest thou of thy honour and greatnesse, to strengthen the hands of the godly or the wicked? and so of all thy other temporal enjoyments; A gracious heart improves them for God; when a Saint prayes for these things, he hath an eye to some heavenly end. If *David* prayes for life, it is not that he may live, but *live and praise God*, Psal. 119. 175. When he was driven from his regal throne by the rebellious armes of *Absalom*; see what his desire was and hope, 2 *Sam.* 15. 25. *The King said to Zadock, Carry back the Ark of God into the City: If I shall finde favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation.* Mark, not shew me *my Crown, my Palace*, but *the Ark*, the *House of God.*

Secondly, a gracious heart pursues earthly things with a holy indifferency, saving the violence and zeal of his spirit for the things of heaven; he useth the former as if he used them not, with a kinde of non-attendency; his head and heart is taken up with higher matters, how he may please God, thrive in his grace, enjoy more intimate communion with Christ in his Ordinances; in these he spreads all his sailes, plyes all his oares, strains every part and power; thus we finde *David* upon his full speed; *My soul pressed hard after thee*, Psalme 63. And before the Arke we finde him dancing with all his might. Now a carnal heart is clean contrary, his zeal is for the world, and his indifferency in the things of God, he prayes as if he did not pray, &c. he sweats in his shop, but chills and growes cold in his closet; O how hard to pully him up to a duty of Gods worship, or to get him out to an Ordinance? No weather shall keep him from the market; raine, blow or snow, he goes thither; but if the Church-path be but a little wet, or the air somewhat cold, 'tis apology enough for him if his pue be empty; when he is about any worldly businesse, he is as earnest at it, as the Idolatrous Smith in hammering of his image: *who* (the Prophet saith) *worketh it with the strength of his armes, yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth, he drinketh not, and is faint*, Isaiah 44. 12. so zealous is the muck-worme in his worldly employments, that he will pinch his carcase, and deny himself his repast in due season to pursue that; The Kitchin there shall waite on the shop: But in the worship of God, 'tis enough to make him sick of the Sermon,

Sermon, and angry with the Preacher, if he be kept beyond his houre; here the Sermon must give place to the Kitchin: so the man for his pleasures and carnal pastime, he tells no clock at his sports, and knows not how the day goes; when night comes, he is angry that it takes him off; but at any heavenly work, O how is the man punisht? time now hath got leaden heels he thinks; all he does at a Sermon is to tell the clock, and see how the glasse runs: if men were not willing to deceive themselves, surely they might know which way their heart goes by the swift motion, or the hard tugging and slow pace it stirres, as well as they know in a boat, whether they row against the tyde, or with it.

Thirdly, the Christian useth these things with a holy fear, lest earth should rob heaven, and his outward enjoyments prejudice his heavenly interest; he eats in fear, works in fear, rejoyceth in his abundance with fear: as *Job* sanctified his children by offering a sacrifice, out of a fear lest they had sinned; so the Christian is continually sanctifying his earthly enjoyments by prayer, that so he may be delivered from the snare of them.

Thirdly, the Christian is heavenly in his keeping of earthly things. The same heavenly Law which he went by in getting, he observes in holding them. As he dares not say he will be rich and honourable in the world, but if God will; so neither that he will hold what he hath; he only keeps them while his heavenly Father calls for them that at first gave them: If God will continue them to him, and entail them on his posterity too, he blesseth God, and so he desires to do also when he takes them away. Indeed Gods meaning in the great things of this world, which sometimes he throwes in upon the Saints, is chiefly to give them the greater advantage of expressing their love to him, in denying them for his sake. God never intended by that strange Providence, in bringing *Moses* to *Pharaoh*'s Court, to settle him there in worldly pomp and grandure, (a carnal heart indeed would have expounded Providence, and interpreted it as a fair occasion put into his hands by God to have advanced himself into the throne, (which some say he might in time have done,) but as an opportunity to make his faith and self-denial more eminently conspicuous in throwing all these at his heels, for which

3.

he hath so honourable a remembrance among the Lords Worthies, *Heb.* 11. 24, 25. And truly a gracious soul reckons he cannot make so much of his worldly interests any other way, as by offering them up for Christs sake; however that Traitour thought *Maryes* ointment might have been carried to a better market, yet no doubt that good woman her selfe was only troubled that she had not one more precious to poure on her dear Saviours head. This makes the Christian ever to hold the sacrificing knife at the throat of his worldly enjoyments, ready to offer them up when God calls; over-board they shall go, rather then hazard a wrack to faith or a good conscience; he sought them in the last place, and therefore he will part with them in the first. *Naboth* will hazard the Kings anger, (which at last cost him his life,) rather than sell an acre or two of land which was his birthright. The Christian will expose all he hath in this world to preserve his hopes for another: *Jacob* in his march towards *Esau*, sent his servants with his flocks before, and came himself with his wives behinde; if he can save any thing from his brothers rage, it shall be what he loves best; If the Christian can save any thing, it shall be his soul, his interest in Christ and Heaven, and then no matter if the rest go, even then he can say, not as
Gen. 33. 9. 11. *Esau* to *Jacob*, I have רב a great deal, but as *Jacob* to him, כל I have all, all I want, all I desire, as *David* expresseth it, *This is all my salvation, and all my desire*, 2 Sam. 23. 5. Now try, whether thy heart be tuned to this note; does heaven give law to thy earthly enjoyments? wouldest thou not keep thy honour, estate, no, not life it selfe to prejudice thy heavenly nature and hopes? which wouldest thou choose, if thou couldest not keep both, a whole skin, or a sound conscience? It was a strange answer, if true, which the Historian saith *Henry* the fifth gave to his Father, who had usurped the crown, and now dying sent for this his son, to whom he said, Fair son, take the crown, (which stood on his pillow by his head) but God knows how I came by it: to whom he answered, I care not how you came by it; now I have it, I will keep it as long as my sword can defend it. He that keeps earth by wrong, cannot expect heaven by right.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

An Exhortation to the pursuit of heaven and heavenly things.

THirdly, Is it heaven and all that is heavenly that Satan seeks to hinder us of? let this provoke us the more earnestly to contend for them. Had we to do with an enemy that came only to plunder us of earthly trifles, would honours, estates, and what this world affords us stay his stomack, it might suffer a debate (in a soul that hath hopes of heaven,) whether it were worth fighting to keep this lumber: but Christ and heaven, these sure are too precious to part withal upon any termes. *Ask the Kingdom for him also*, said *Solomon* to *Bath-sheba*, when she begg'd *Abishag* for *Adonijah*. What can the devil leave thee worth if he deprive thee of these? and yet I confesse I have heard of one, that wished God would let him alone, and not take him from what he had here: Vile Brute! the voice of a swine and not a man, that could choose to wallow in the dung and ordure of his carnal pleasures, and wish himselfe for ever shut up with his swill in the hogs coat of this dunghill earth, rather than leave these to dwell in Heavens Palace, and be admitted to no meaner pleasures, than what God himself with his Saints enjoy. It were even just if God gave such brutes as these a swines face to their swinish hearts: But alas, how few then should we meet that would have the countenance of a man? the greatest part of the world (even all that are carnal and worldly,) being of the same minde, though not so impudent as that wretch, to speak what they think. The lives of men tell plain enough that they say in their hearts, it is good being here, that they wish they could build Tabernacles on earth for all the mansions that are prepared in heaven. The transgression of the wicked said in *Davids* heart, *that the feare of God was not before them*, Psal. 36. 1. and may not the worldlinesse of a muck-worm say in the heart of any rational man, that heaven and heavenly excellencyes are not before their eyes or thoughts? O what a *Use* 3.

deep silence is there concerning these in the conversations of men! Heaven is such a stranger to the most, that very few are heard to enquire the way thither, or so much as ask the question in earnest, what they shall do to be saved. The most expresse no more desires of attaining heaven, than those blessed souls now in heaven do of coming again to dwell on earth; Alas, their heads are full of other projects, they are either as *Israel*, scatter'd over the face of the earth to gather straw, or busied in picking that straw they have gathered, labouring to get the world, or pleasing themselves with what they have got. So that it is no more than needs to use some arguments to call men off the world, to the pursuit of heaven, and what is heavenly.

1. First, for earthly things, it is not necessary that thou hast them; that is necessary which cannot be supplied *per vicarium*, with somewhat besides it selfe. Now there is no such earthly enjoyment, but may be so supplyed, as to make its room more desireable than its company. In Heaven there shall be light and no Sun, a rich feast and yet no meat, glorious robes and yet no cloathes, there shall want nothing, and yet none of this worldly glory be found there; yea, even while we are here, they may be recompenced; thou mayest be under infirmities of body, and yet better than if thou hadst health: *The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity*, Isa. 33.34. Thou mayest misse of worldly honour, and obtain with those Worthies of Christ, *Heb.* 11. a good report by faith, and that is a name better than of the great ones of the earth: thou mayest be poor in the world, and yet rich in grace; and *Godlinesse with content is great gaine.* In a word, if thou partest with thy temporal life, and findest an eternal, what doest thou lose by the change? but heaven and heavenly things are such as cannot be recompenced with any other. Thou hast a heavenly soul in thy bosome, lose that, and where canst thou have another? There is but one heaven, misse that, and where can you take up your lodging but in hell? One Christ that can lead you thither, reject him, *and there remains no more sacrifice for sinne.* O that men would think on these things! Go sinner to the world, and see what it can afford you in lieu of these; may be it will offer to entertain you with its pleasures and delights;

lights; O poor reward for the losse of Christ and heaven! Is this all thou canst get? doth Satan rob thee of heaven and happinesse, and only give thee this posie to smell on as thou art going to thy execution? will these quench hell-fire, or so much as cool those flames thou art falling into? who but those that have foredone their understandings, would take these toyes and new nothings for Christ and heaven? while Satan is pleasing your fancies with these rattles and bables, his hand is in your treasure, robbing you of that which is only necessary; 'Tis more necessary to be saved than to be; better not to be than to have a being in hell.

Secondly, earthly things are such, as it is a great uncertainty, 2.
whether with all our labour we can have them or not. The world, though so many thousand years old, hath not learn't the Merchant such a method of trading, as that from it he may infallibly conclude he shall at last get an estate by his trade: nor the Courtier such rules of comporting himself to the humour of his Prince, as to assure him he shall rise. They are but few that carry away the prize in the worlds lottery, the greater number have only their labour for their paines, and a sorrowful remembrance left them of their egregious folly, to be led such a wilde goose chase after that which hath deceived them at last. But now for heaven and the things of heaven, there is such a clear and certain rule laid down, that if he will but take the counsel of the Word, we can neither mistake the way, nor in that way miscarry of the end. *As many as walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and the whole Israel of God.* There are some indeed who run, and yet obtain not this prize, that seek & find not; knock and find the door shut upon them; but it is, because they do it either not in the right manner, or in the right season. Some would have heaven, but if God save them, he must save their sins also, for they do not mean to part with them; and how heaven can hold God and such company together judge you; As they come in at one door, Christ and all those holy spirits with him would run out at the other. Ungrateful wretches, that will not come to this glorious feast, unlesse they may bring that with them, which would disturb the joy of that blisseful state, and offend all the guests that sit at the Table with them, yea, drive God out of his own mansion-house. A second sort would have heaven, but like him in *Ruth chap.* 4.

v. 2. 3, 4. who had a minde to his Kinſman *Elimelechs* land, and would have paid for the purchaſe, but he liked not to have it by marrying *Ruth*, and ſo miſſed of it: Some ſeem very forward to have heaven and ſalvation, if their own righteouſneſſe could procure the ſame, (all the good they do, and duties they performe, they lay up for this purchaſe) but at laſt periſh, becauſe they cloſe not with Chriſt, and take not heaven in his right. A third ſort are content to have it by Chriſt, but their deſires are ſo impotent and liſtleſſe, that they put them upon no vigorous uſe of means to obtain him, and ſo (like the ſluggard) they ſtarve, becauſe they will not pull their hands out of their boſome of ſloth to reach their food that is before them: for the world they have mettal enough, and too much, they trudge far and near for that, and when they have run themſelves out of breath, can ſtand and *pant after the duſt of the earth*, as the Prophet phraſeth it, *Amos* 2. 7. But for Chriſt and obtaining intereſt in him, O how key-cold are they! there is a kinde of cramp invades all the powers of their ſouls when they ſhould pray, hear, examine their hearts, draw out their affections in hungrings and thirſtings after his grace and Spirit. 'Tis ſtrange to ſee how they even now went full ſoop to the world, are ſuddenly becalm'd, not a breath of winde ſtirring to any purpoſe in their ſouls after theſe things, and is it any wonder that Chriſt and Heaven ſhould be denied to them that have no more mind to them? Laſtly, ſome have zeal enough to have Chriſt and Heaven, but it is when the Maſter of the houſe is riſen, and hath ſhut to the door, and truly then they may ſtand long enough rapping, before any come to let them in. There is no Goſpel preached in another world; but as for thee poor ſoul, who art perſwaded to renounce thy luſts, throw away the conceit of thy own righteouſneſſe, that thou mayeſt run with more ſpeed to Chriſt, and art ſo poſſeſt with the excellency of Chriſt, thy own preſent need of him, and ſalvation by him, that thou panteſt after him more than life it ſelf; In Gods Name go on and ſpeed, be of good comfort, he calls thee by name to come unto him, that thou mayeſt have reſt for thy ſoul. There is an office in the Word where thou mayeſt have thy ſoul and its eternal happineſſe enſured to thee: Thoſe that come to him, as he will himſelf in no wiſe caſt away, ſo not ſuffer any other to pluck

them

them away. *This day* (saith Christ to *Zaccheus*) *salvation is come to thy house*, Luk 19. 9. Salvation comes to thee, (poor soul) that openest thy heart to receive Christ, thou hast eternal life already, as sure as if thou wert a glorified Saint, now walking in that heavenly City. O Sirs, if there were a free trade proclaimed to the *Indies*, enough gold for all that went, and a certainty of making a safe voyage, who would stay at home? But alas, this can never be had: all this, and infinitely more, may be said for heaven; and yet how few leave their uncertain hopes of the world to trade for it? what account can be given for this, but the desperate atheisme of mens hearts? they are not yet fully perswaded whether the Scripture speaks true or not, whether they may relye upon the discovery that God makes in his word of this new-found land, and those mines of spiritual treasure there to be had as certain. God open the eyes of the unbelieving world, (as he did the Prophets servants,) that they may see these things to be realities and not fictions; 'tis faith only that gives a being to these things in our hearts. By faith *Moses* saw him that was invisible.

Thirdly, earthly things when we have them, we are not sure of them; like birds, they hop up and down, now on this hedge, and anon upon that, none can call them his own: rich to day, and poor to morrow: In health when we lye down, and arrested with pangs of death before midnight: Joyful Parents, one while solacing our selves with the hopes of our budding posterity, and may be ere long knocks one of *Jobs* messengers at our door to tell us they are all dead; now in honour, but who knows whether we shall not live to see that buried in scorn and reproach? The Scripture compares the multitude of people to waters; the great ones of the world sit upon these waters; as the ship floates upon the waves, so do their honours upon the breath and favour of the multitude; and how long is he like to sit that is carried upon a wave? one while they are mounted up to heaven, (as *David* speaks of the ship) and then down again they fall into the deep. *We have ten parts in the King*, (say the men of *Israel*,) 2 Sam. 19. 43. and in the very next verse, *Sheba* doth but sound a trumpet of sedition, saying, *We have no part in David, no inheritance in the son of* Jesse, and the winde is in another corner presently: for it's said, *Every man of Israel*

went.

went up from after David, and followed Sheba. Thus was *David* cryed up and down, and that almoſt in the ſame breath. Unhappy man he, that hath no ſurer pottion than what this variable world will afford him! The time of mourning for the departure of all earthly enjoyments is at hand, we ſhall ſee them as *Eglons* ſervants did their Lord, fallen down dead before us, and weep becauſe they are not. What folly then is it to dandle this vain world in our affections, whoſe joy like the childes laughter on the mothers knee, is ſure to end in a cry at laſt, and neglect heaven and heavenly things which endure for ever? O remember *Dives* ſtirring up his pillow, and compoſing himſelf to reſt, how he was call'd up with the tydings of death, before he was warme in this bed of eaſe, and laid with ſorrow on another, which God had made for him in flames, from whence we hear him roaring in the anguiſh of his conſcience. O ſoul, couldeſt thou get but an intereſt in the heavenly things we are ſpeaking of, theſe would not thus ſlip from under thee; heaven is a Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken, Chriſt an abiding portion, his graces and comforts ſure waters that fail not, but ſpring up unto eternal life. The quailes that were food for the *Iſraelites* luſt, ſoon ceaſed; but the Rock that was drink to their faith followed them; this Rock is Chriſt: make ſure of him, and he will make ſure of thee, he'll follow thee to thy ſick-bed, and lie in thy boſome, chearing thy heart with his ſweet comforts, when worldly joyes lie cold upon thee, (as *Davids* cloathes on him) and no warmth of comfort to be got from them. When thy outward ſenſes are lock't up, that thou canſt neither ſee the face of thy dear friends, nor hear the councel and comfort they would give thee, then he will come (though theſe doors be ſhut) and ſay, Peace be to thee my dear childe; fear not death or devils, I ſtay to receive thy laſt breath, and have here my Angels waiting, that aſſoon as thy ſoul is breathed out of thy body, they may carry and lay it in my boſome of love, where I will nouriſh thee with thoſe eternal joyes that my blood hath purchaſed, and my love prepared for thee.

4. Fourthly, earthly things are empty and unſatisfying. We may have too much; but never enough of them, they oft breed loathing, but never content, and indeed how ſhould they, being ſo diſ-

disproportionate to the vast desires of these immortal spirits that dwell in our bosomes? A spirit hath not flesh and bones, neither can it be fed with such, and what hath the world, but a few bones covered over with some fleshly delights to give it? The lesse is blessed of the greater, not the greater of the lesse. These things therefore being so far inferiour to the nature of man, he must look higher if he will be blessed, even to God himself who is the Father of spirits. God intended these things for our use, not enjoyment; and what folly is it to think we can squeaze that from them, which God never put in them? They are breasts, that moderately drawn, yield good milk, sweet refreshing, but wring them too hard, and you will suck nothing but winde or blood from them. We lose what they have, by expecting to finde what they have not; none find lesse sweetnesse and more dissatisfaction in these things, than those who strive most to please themselves with them. The cream of the creature floats a top, and he that is not content to fleet it, but thinks by drinking a deeper draught to finde yet more, goes further to speed worse, being sure by the disappointment he shall meet to pierce himself through with many sorrows. But all these feares might happily be escaped, if thou wouldest turn thy back on the creature, and face about for heaven: labour to get Christ, and through him hopes of heaven, and thou takest the right road to content, thou shalt see it before thee, and enjoy the prospect of it as thou goest, yea, finde that every step thou drawest nearer and nearer to it; O what a sweet change wouldest thou finde? As a sick man coming out of an impure unwholesome climate, where he never was well, when he gets into fresh aire or his native soile: so wilt thou finde a cheering of thy spirits, and reviving thy soul with unspeakable content and peace. Having once closed with Christ, first the guilt of all thy sinnes is gone, and this spoil'd all thy mirth before; all your dancing of a childe, when some pin pricks it will not make it quiet, or merry; well, now that pin is taken out which robbed thee of the joy of thy life. Secondly, thy nature is renewed and sanctified; and when is a man at ease, if not when he is in health? and what is holinesse, but the creature restored to his right temper, in which God created him? Thirdly, thou becomest a childe of God, and that cannot but please thee well (I hope) to

be ſon or daughter to ſo great a King. Fourthly, thou haſt a right to heavens glory, whither thou ſhalt ere long be conducted to take and hold poſſeſſion of that thy inheritance for ever, and who can tell what that is? *Nicephorus* tells us of one *Abgarus*, a great man, that (hearing ſo much of Chriſts fame, by reaſon of the miracles he wrought,) ſent a Painter to take his Picture, and that the Painter when he came was not able to do it, becauſe of that radiancy of divine ſplendor which ſate on Chriſts face. Whether this be true or no, I leave it; but to be ſure, there is ſuch a brightneſſe on the face of Chriſt glorified, and that happineſſe which in heaven Saints ſhall have with him, as forbids us that dwell in mortal fleſh to conceive of it aright, much more to expreſſe; 'tis beſt going thither to be informed, and then we ſhall confeſſe we on earth heard not half of what we there finde, yea, that our preſent conceptions are no more like to that viſion of glory we ſhall there have, then the Sunne in the Painters table, is to the Sun it ſelf in the Heavens. And if all this be ſo, why then do you ſpend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which ſatisfyeth not, yea, for that which keeps you from that which can ſatisfie? Earthly things are like ſome traſh, which do not only not nouriſh, but take away the appetite from that which would. Heaven and heavenly things are not reliſhed by a ſoule vitiated with theſe. Manna, though for deliciouſneſſe called Angels food, yet but light bread to an Egyptian palate. But theſe ſpiritual things depend not on thy opinion, O man, whoever thou art (as earthly things in a great meaſure do) that the value of them ſhould riſe or fall as the worlds Exchange doth, and as vain man is pleaſed to rate them; think gold dirt, and it is ſo; for all the royal ſtamp on it. Count the ſwelling titles of worldly honour (that proud duſt ſo brags in) vanity, and they are ſuch: but have baſe thoughts of Chriſt, and he is not the worſe; ſlight heaven as much as you will, it will be heaven ſtill, and when thou comeſt ſo far to thy wits with the Prodigal, as to know which is beſt fare, husks or bread; where's beſt living, among hogs in the field, or in thy Fathers houſe, than thou wilt know how to judge of theſe heavenly things better; till then go and make the beſt market thou canſt of the world, but look not to finde this pearle of price, true ſatisfaction to thy ſoul in any of the

the creatures ſhops; and were it not better to take it when thou mayeſt have it, then after thou haſt wearied thy ſelfe in vaine in following the creature, to come back with ſhame, and may be miſſe of it here alſo, becauſe thou wouldeſt not have it when it was offered?

VERSE 13.

Wherefore take unto you the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to withſtand in the evil day, and having done all to ſtand.

THe Apoſtle in theſe words re-aſſumes his former Exhortation mentioned, *verſe* 11. and preſſeth it with a new force, from that more particular diſcovery which he gives of the enemy, *verſe* 12. where like a faithful Scout he makes a full report of Satans great power and malice, and alſo diſcloſeth what a dangerous deſign he hath upon the Saints, no leſſe than to deſpoil them of all that is heavenly: from all which he gives them a ſecond alarm, and bids them *Arme, arme, Wherefore take unto you, &c.* In the words conſider,

Firſt, the exhortation with the inference, *Wherefore take unto you the whole Armour of God.*

Secondly, the argument with which he urgeth the exhortation, and that is double.

Firſt, *That ye may be able to withſtand in the evil day.*

Secondly, *having done all to ſtand*; that is, both able to fight, and able to conquer. As for the firſt general, *the Exhortation*, we ſhall wave it as to the ſubſtance of it, being the ſame with what we have handled, *v.* 11. only there are two obſervables which we ſhall lightly touch. The one from the repetition of the very ſame exhortation ſo ſoon, one verſe only interpoſed.

The other from the verbe the Apostle useth here, which being not the same with *ver.* 11. affords a different note. There it is, Ἐνδύσασθε, here, ἀναλαμβάνετε.

CHAP. I.

The reason why the Apostle renews the same Exhortation, as also what truths Ministers are often to preach to their people.

FIrst of the first, the repetition of the same exhortation, and that in so short a space. Sure it was not for want of matter, but rather out of abundance of zeal, that he harps the second time on the same string. Indeed he is the better Workman, who drives one naile home with reiterated blowes, than he which covets to enter many, but fastens none. Such Preachers are not likely to reach the conscience, who hop from one truth to another, but dwell on none. Every hearer is not so quick as the Preacher, to take a notion as 'tis first darted forth, neither can many carry away so much of that Sermon, which is made up all of varieties, (where a point is no sooner named, but presently pulls back its hand, and another makes a breach and comes forth, before the first hath been opened and hammered upon the conscience by a powerful application). As where the discourse is homogeneal, and some one necessary truth is clear'd, insisted on, and urged home with blow upon blow; Here the whole matter of the discourse is a kinne, and one part remembred brings the memory acquainted with the other; whereas in the former one puts out the other in a weak memory. Short hints and away may please a Scholar, but not so profitable for others, the one more fit for the Schooles, but the other for the Pulpit. Were I to buy a garment in a shop, I should like him better, that layes one good piece or two before me that are for my turn, (which I may fully peruse) than him who takes down all his shop, and heaps piece upon piece, (meerly to shew his store) till at last for variety I can look wishly on none; they lie so one upon another.

Again,

Again, as it is profitable thus to insist on truths, so 'tis not unbecoming a Minister to preach the same truths again and again; *Paul* here goes over and over the same exhortation, *v.*11. *v.*13. and elsewhere tells us, *this is not grievous to him, but to them it is safe*, to hear the same things over and over, *Phil.*3.1. There are three sorts of Truths must in our Ministry be preached oft. 2.

First, *Fundamental Truths*, or, as we call them, catechise-points, that contain truths necessary to be known and believed. The weight of the whole building lies on these ground-cells, more than on superstructory truths. In a Kingdome there are some staple-commodities and trades, without which the Common-weale could not subsist, as wool, corne, &c. in our Countrey, and these ought to be encouraged above others, (which though they be an ornament to the Nation, yea, adde to the riches of it, yet are not so necessary to the subsistence of it). Thus here; there is an excellent use of our other Ministerial labours, as they tend to beautifie and adorne, yea, enrich the Christian with the knowledge of spiritual mysteries; but that which is chiefly to be regarded is the constant faithful opening of those main truths of the Gospel. These are the Land-marks, and shew us the bounds of truth; and as it is in Townes that butt one upon another; if the inhabitants do not sometimes perambulate, and walk the bounds, (to shew the youth what they are) when the old studs are gone, the next generation may lose all their priviledges by their encroaching neighbours, because not able to tell what is their own. There is no fundamental truth, but hath some evil neighbour, (heresie I mean,) butting on it; and the very reason why a spirit of errour hath so encroach't of late yeares upon truth, is, because we have not walk't the bounds with our people in acquainting them with, and stablishing their judgments on these fundamental points, so frequently and carefully as is requisite. And people are much in the fault, because they cast so much contempt upon this work, that they count a Sermon on such points next to lost, and only childs meat. 1.

Secondly, *those truths are oft to be preach't, which Ministers observe to be most undermined by Satan or his instruments in the judgements and lives of their people.* The Preacher must read and

ſtudy his people as diligently as any book in his ſtudy; and as he findes them, diſpenſe like a faithful ſteward unto them. *Paul* takes notice that the *Galatians* had been in ill handling by falſe Apoſtles, who had even bewitch't them back to the Law in that great point of Juſtification, and ſee how he beats upon that point. Our people complain, we are ſo much, ſo oft reproving the ſame errour or ſin, and the fault is their own, becauſe they will not leave it; who will blame the dog for continuing to bark, when the thief is all the while in the yard? Alas, alas, it is not once or twice rowſing againſt ſin will do it. When people think the Miniſter ſhews his lazineſſe, becauſe he preacheth the ſame things, he may then be exerciſing his patience, in continuing to exhort and reprove thoſe who oppoſe, waiting, if at laſt God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. We are bid to lift up our voice like a trumpet, and would you have us ceaſe while the battel laſts, or ſound a retreat when it ſhould be a battel?

Thirdly, *truths of daily uſe and practice.* Theſe are like bread and ſalt, whatever elſe is on, theſe muſt be on the board every meale. Saint *Peter* was of this minde, 2 *Pet.*1. 12. *I will not be negligent to put you alwayes in remembrance of theſe things, though ye know them.* He had (you may ſee) been ſpeaking of ſuch graces and duties, that they could not paſſe a day without the exerciſe of them, and therefore will be ever their Monitor, to ſtir up their pure mindes about them. All is not well, when a man is weary of his ordinary food, and nothing will go down but rarities; the ſtomack is ſickly, when a man delights rather to pick ſome ſallet, than eat of ſolid meat; and how far this dainty age is gone in this ſpiritual diſeaſe, I think few are ſo far come to themſelves, as yet to conſider and lament. O Sirs, be not weary as in doing, ſo not in hearing thoſe ſavoury truths preach't you have daily uſe of, becauſe you know them, and have heard them often; faith and repentance will be good doctrine to preach and heare to the end of the world; you may as well quarrel with God, becauſe he hath made but one heaven, and one way to it, as with the Preacher for preaching theſe over and over; if thy heart were humble, and thy palate ſpiritual, old truths would be new to thee every time thou heareſt them. In heaven the Saints draw all their wine of joy, (as I may ſo ſay at one tap).

tap) and ſhall to all eternity, and yet it never taſtes flat. God is that one object their ſouls are filled with, and never weary of; and can any thing of God and his love be wearisome to thee in the hearing here? I am not all this while an Advocate for any Loyterer in our Lords vine-yard; for any ſlothful ſervant in the work of the Goſpel, who wraps up his talent in idleneſſe, or buries it in the earth, (where (may be) he is digging and playing the worldling all the week, and then hath nothing to ſet before his people on the Lords day, but one or two old mouldy loaves, which were kneaded many years before.) This is not the good Steward; here is the old, but where are the new things which he ſhould bring out of his treaſure? If the Miniſter labours not to encreaſe his ſtock, he is the worſt thief in the Pariſh. It is wicked for a man truſted with the improving of Orphanes eſtates, to let them lye dead by him: much more for a Miniſter not to improve his gifts, (which I may call the town-ſtock given for the good of the ſouls of both rich and poor;) if that *Preacher* was wiſe, *Eccleſ.* 12. 9. who ſtill *taught the people knowledge*, that is, was ever going on, endeavouring to build them higher in knowledge, and that he might, did *give good heed, and ſought out, and ſet in order many Proverbs*; then ſurely he will be proved a fooliſh Preacher at laſt, that waſtes his time in ſloth, or ſpends more of it in ſtudying how to adde to his eſtate out of his peoples, then how to adde to their gifts and graces, by a conſcionable endeavour to encreaſe his own.

CHAP. II.

The beſt of Saints ſubject to decline in their graces; and why we are to endeavour a recovery of decayes in grace.

THe ſecond obſervable in the exhortation is taken from the verbe which the Apoſtle uſeth, ἀναλαμβάνετε, which ſignifies not onely to take, but to take again, or recover a thing which we have loſt, or re-aſſume a thing which for the preſent we have left. 2.

left. Now the Apostle writing to the Saints at *Ephesus*, who (at least many of them) were not now to put on this Armour by a Conversion, (or the first work of faith, which no doubt had already past upon many among them) he in regard of them and believers to the end of the world hath a further meaning, *i.e.* that they would put on more close where this armour hangs loose, and they wouldrecover where they have let fall any duty, or decayed in any grace. So that the *Note* is,

Doct. *That the Christian should have an especial care to repaire his broken Armour, to recover his decaying graces.* This Armour may be battered; I might shew sad examples in the several pieces. Was not *Jacobs* girdle of truth and sincerity unbuckled, when he used that sinful policy to get the blessing? he was not the plain man then, but the subplantour; but he had as good have stayed Gods time: he was paid home in his own kinde. He puts a cheat on his father, and did not *Laban* put a cheat on him, giving *Leah* for *Rachel*? What say you to *Davids* breast-plate of righteousnesse in the matter of *Uriah*? was it not shot through, and that holy man fearfully wounded, who lay almost a yeare (for ought we reade of him,) before he came to himself, so far as to be thoroughly sensible of his sin, till *Nathan* a faithful Chirurgion was sent to search the wound, and clear it of that dead flesh, which had grown over it? And *Jonah*, (otherwise a holy Prophet) when God would send him on an errand to *Nineveh*, he hath his *shoes* to seek, I mean that preparation and readinesse with which his minde should have been shod, to have gone at the first call. Good *Hezekiah* we finde how near his helmet of hope was of being beaten off his head, who tell us himself what his thoughts were in the day of his distresse, that he *should not see the Lord in the land of the living*, expecting that God would never let go his hold, *till like a Lion he had broke his bones, and at last made an end of him.* Even *Abraham* himself, famous for faith, yet had his fits of unbelief and distrustful qualms coming over his valiant heart; now in this case the Christians care should be to get his armour speedily repaired. A battered helmet is next to no helmet in point of present use; grace in a decay, is like a man pull'd off his legs by sickness; if some means be not used to recover it, little service will be done by it, or comfort received from it. Therefore Christ gives this Church of *Ephesus*

pheſus(to whom *Paul* wrote this Epiſtle)this counſel, *To remember from whence ſhe was fallen,to repent and do her firſt works*, How many does a declining Chriſtian wrong at once?

Firſt, he wrongs God, and that in a high degree, becauſe God reckons upon more honour to be paid him in by his Saints grace, than by all other talents which his creatures have to trade with in the world. He can in ſome ſenſe better bear the open ſins of the world,than the decayes of his Saints graces; They by abuſing their talents rob him but of his *oyle, flaxe and wool*: but the Chriſtian by the other, bereaves him of the glory which ſhould be paid him from his faith, zeal, patience,ſelf-denial,ſincerity and the reſt. Suppoſe a Maſter ſhould truſt one ſervant with his money,and another with his child to be look't to; would he not be more diſpleaſed to ſee his dear childe hurt, or almoſt kill'd by the negligence of the one,than his money ſtollen by the careleſneſſe of the other? Grace is the new creature,the birth of the Spirit; when this comes to any harme by the Chriſtians careleſſe walking, it muſt needs go nearer the heart of God, than the wrong he hath from the world, who are truſted with nothing like this. 1.

Secondly, he that declines in grace, and labours not to repair it, he wrongs his brethren who have a ſhare in one anothers grace; he wrongs his whole body that ſeeks not cure for a wound in any member. We are bid *to love one another*, 2 *epiſt. of John* 5. *ver.* but how ſhall we ſhew our love to one another? the very next words will direct us. *And this is love that we walk after his Commandments*. Indeed we ſhew little love to our brethren by ſinning, whereby we are ſure either to enſnare them or grieve them; and how to let grace go down,and ſin not go up, is a riddle to any that know what they both are. 2.

Thirdly, the Chriſtian wrongs himſelf in not endeavouring to repaire his broken Armour, and recover his declining grace. By this he loſes the evidence of his inheritance,at leaſt ſo blots it,that it cannot be ſo clearly perceived by him. A declining Chriſtian muſt needs be a doubting Chriſtian; becauſe the common ſymptome of an hypocrite, is,to wear and waſte like a ſtake ſet in the ground, (which rots, while true grace like the tree grows.) Is not this the knot which the devil poſeth many poor ſouls withal,

and findes them work for many years to untye? If thou wert a Christian, thou wouldest grow. Right Saints go from strength to strength, and thou goest from strength to weakness. They go up the hill to *Zion*; every Ordinance and Providence is a step that bears them nearer heaven; but thou goest down the hill, and art further from thy salvation than when thou didst first believe (as thou thoughtest;) and doth it stand with thy wisdom, Christian, to put a staffe into the devils hand, an argument into his mouth, to dispute against thy salvation with? If you held an estate by the life of a childe, which upon the death of it should all go away from you, that childe I warrant you should be well look't unto; his head should not ake, but you would post to the Physician for counsel; I pray what is your evidence for that glorious estate you hope for? Is it not Christ within you? Is not this new creature (which may well be call'd Christ for its likeness to him) the young heire of heavens glory? and when that is sick or weak, is it not time to use all meanes for its recovery? while thus, thou canst neither live nor dye comfortably. Not live; a man in a consumption has little joy of his life; he neither findes sweetness in his meat, nor delight in his work, as a healthful man doth. O how sweet is the promise to faith when active and vigorous? how easie the yoke of the Command to the Christian, when his conscience is not gall'd with guilt, nor his strength enfeebled by temptation? but the Christian in a declining condition, he tastes not the promise; every command is grievous, and every duty burdensome to him: he goes in pain like one whose foot is out of joynt, though the way be never so pleasant. And he is as unfit to dye as he is to live; such a one can like no more to hear the news of death, than a tenant that wants his rent doth to hear of the quarter-day. This made *David* beg time of God; *Spare me a little, that I may recover my strength.*

Having shewen you why the Christian should endeavour to recover his declining graces, it will be very requisite to give a word of counsel to the Christian:

First, to direct him how to judge of the declining state of grace, that he may not passe a false judgement upon himself therein.

Secondly,

Secondly, to direct him when he findes grace to be in a declination, how he may recover it.

CHAP. III.

A cautionary direction frrm what we may not, as alſo from what we may judge our graces to be in a declination.

FIrſt of the firſt, *How may a Chriſtian judge whether grace be declining in him or no?* *Queſt.*

Firſt, I ſhall reſolve this negatively, and ſhew by what he is not to judge his grace to decline. *Anſw.*

Secondly, poſitively, by what he may certainly conclude a decay of grace.

Firſt, negatively, and that in ſeveral particulars.

Firſt, Chriſtian, do not judge grace to be fallen weaker, becauſe thy ſenſe of corruption is grown ſtronger: This oft lies at the bottome of poor ſouls complaints in this caſe. O they never felt pride, hypocriſie and other corruptions ſo haunt them as now; none knows how they are vexed with theſe, and the like beſides themſelves. Now let me ask thee who makeſt this ſad moane, whether thou doeſt not think theſe corruptions were in thee before thou didſt thus feel them? how oft haſt thou prayed as formally, and not been troubled? how oft haſt thou ſtood chatting with the ſame luſts, and thy ſoul hath not been laid low before the Lord with ſuch abaſement of thy ſelf as now? deal faithfully between God and thy ſoul, and tell not a lye for God by bearing falſe witneſſe againſt thy ſelfe. If it be thus, thou haſt rather a comfortable ſigne of grace growing than decaying. Sin cannot be on the getting hand, if the ſenſe of ſinne grow quick; this is the concomitant of a thriving ſoul; none ſo full of complaints of their own hearts as ſuch; the leaſt ſin goes now to their very ſouls, which makes them think viler of themſelves than ever: but it is not the encreaſe of ſin in them, but the advance of their love to Chriſt makes them judge ſo: when the Sun ſhines with ſome power, and the year gets up, we obſerve, 1.

though we may have frosts and snow, yet they do not lie long, but are soon dissolved by the Sun. O 'tis a sweet signe that the love of Christ shines with a force upon thy soul, that no corruptions can lie long in thy bosome, but they melt into sorrow and bitter complaints. That is the decaying soul where sinne lies bound up and frozen, little sense of, or sorrow for it appears.

2. Secondly, Take heed thou thinkest not grace decayes, because thy comfort withdrawes. The influence of the Sun comes where the light of it is not to be found, yea, is mighty, as appears in those Mines of gold and silver, which are concocted by the same. And so may the actings of grace be vigorous in thee, when least under the shines of his countenance. Did ever faith triumph more than in our Saviour, crying, *My God, my God*! here faith was at its *meridian*, when it was midnight in respect of joy. Possibly thou comest from an Ordinance, and bringest not home with thee those sheaves of comfort thou usest to do, and therefore concludest grace acted not in thee as formerly. Truly if thou hast nothing else to go by, thou mayest wrong the grace of God in thee exceedingly; because thy comfort is extrinsecal to thy duty, a boon which God may give or not, yea, doth give to the weak, and deny to the strong. The Traveller may go as fast, and ride as much ground, when the Sun doth not shine, as when it doth; though (indeed he goes not so merrily on his journey) nay, sometimes he makes the more hast; the warm Sun makes him sometime to lie down & loyter, but when dark and cold he puts on with more speed. Some graces thrive best (like some flowers) in the shade, such as humility, dependence on God, &c.

3. Thirdly, take heed thou doest not mistake, and think thy grace decayes, when may be 'tis only thy temptations encrease, and not thy grace decrease. If you should hear a man say, because he cannot to day run so fast, when a hundred weight is on his back, as he could yesterday without any such a burden, that therefore he was grown weaker; you would soon tell him where his mistake lies. Temptation lies not in the same heavinesse alway upon the Christians shoulder; observe therefore whether Satan is not more than ordinary let loose to assault thee, whether thy temptations come not with more force and violence than ever; possibly, though thou doest not with the same facility

lity overcome these, as thou hast done lesse, yet grace may act stronger in conflicting with the greater, than in overcoming the lesse. The same ship, that when lightly ballasted, and favoured with the winde goes mounting, at another time deeply laden, and going against winde and tide, may move with a slow pace, and yet they in the ship take more pains to make it sail thus, than they did when it went faster.

Secondly, positively, how thou mayest conclude that grace is declining; and that in a threefold respect.

First, in reference to temptations to sin.

Secondly, in reference to the duties of Gods worship.

Thirdly, the frame of thy heart in worldly employments.

First, in reference to sin, and that is threefold.

First, when thou art not so wakeful to discover the encroachings of sin upon thee as formerly; at one time we finde *Davids* heart smote him, when he but rent the skirt of *Sauls* garment: at another time when his eye glanced on *Bathsheba*, he takes no such notice of the snare Satan had him in, and so is led from one sin to another, which plainly shewed that grace in him was heavy-eyed, and his heart not in so holy a frame as it had been. If an enemy comes up to the gates, and the sentinel not so much as give an alarm to the City of his approach, it shewes he is off his guard, either fallen asleep, or worse: If grace were awake, and thy conscience had not contracted some hardnesse, it would do its office. 1.

Secondly, when a temptation to sin is discovered, and thou findest thy heart shut up that thou doest not pray against it, or not with that zeal and holy indignation, as formerly upon such occasions; it is a bad signe, that lust hath got an advantage of thy grace, that thou canst not readily betake thy selfe to thy armes. Thy affections are bribed, and this makes thee so cold a Suitour at the Throne of Grace, for help against thine enemy. 2.

Thirdly, when the arguments prevailing most with thee to resist temptations to sin, or to mourn for sin committed, are more carnal and lesse Evangelical then formerly: may be thou remembrest when thy love to Christ would have spit fire on the face of Satan tempting thee to such a sin; but now that holy fire is so abated, that if there were not some other carnal motives 3.

to make the vote full, it would hazard to be carried for it, rather than againſt it; and ſo in mourning for a ſin there is poſſibly now ſome ſlaviſh arguments, (like an onion in the eye) which makes thee weep, rather than pure ingenuity ariſing from love to God whom thou haſt offended; this ſpeaks a ſad decay; and the more mixture there is of ſuch carnal arguments, either in the reſiſting of, or mourning for ſin, the greater the declination of grace is. *Davids* natural heat ſure was much decayed, when he needed ſo many cloathes to be laid on him, and he yet feel ſo little heat; the time was he would have ſweat with fewer. I am afraid, many their love to Chriſt will be found (in theſe declining times) to have loſt ſo much of its youthful vigour, that what would formerly have put them into a holy fury, and burning zeal againſt ſome ſins, (ſuch as Sabbath-breaking, pride of apparel, neglect of family-duties, &c.) hath now much ado to keep any heat at all in them againſt the ſame.

Secondly, in point of duties of worſhip.

1. Firſt, if thy heart doth not prompt thee with that forwardneſſe and readineſſe as formerly, to hold communion with God in any duty; poſſibly thou knoweſt the time when thy heart eccho-ed back to the motions of Gods Spirit, bidding thee, *Seek his face; Thy face, Lord, will I ſeek*; yea, thou didſt long as much till a Sabbath or Sermon-ſeaſon came, as the carnal wretch doth till it be gone; but now thy pulſe doth not beat ſo quick a march to the Ordinances publick or ſecret; nature cannot but decay, if appetite to food go away; a craving ſoul is the thriving ſoul, ſuch a childe that will not let his mother reſt, but is frequently crying for the breaſt.

2. Secondly, when thou declineſt in thy care to performe duties in a ſpiritual ſort, and to preſerve the ſenſe of thoſe more inward failings, which in duty none but thy ſelf can check thee of. It is not frequency in duty, but ſpirituality in duty, cauſeth thriving, and therefore neglect in this point ſoon brings grace into a conſumptive poſture. Poſſibly, ſoul, the time was thou wert not ſatisfyed with praying, but thou didſt watch thy heart ſtrictly, (as a man would every piece in a ſumme of money he pays, leſt he ſhould wrong his friend with any braſſe or uncurrant coin) thou wouldeſt have God not only have duty, but duty ſtamp't with that faith which makes it currant, have that zeal and ſince-

rity

rity which makes it Gospel-weight; but now thou art more careless and formal; O look to it (poor soul) thou wilt, if thou continue thus careless, melt in thy spiritual estate apace. Such dealings will spoil thy trade with heaven. God will not take off these slighty duties at thy hands.

Thirdly, when a Christian gets little spiritual nourishment from communion with God, to what it hath done: The time hath been (it may be) thou couldest shew what came of thy praying, hearing and fasting; but now the case is altered. There is a double strength communion with God imparts to a soul in a healthful disposition; strength to faith, and strength for our obediential walking; doest thou hear and pray, and get no more strength to hold by a promise, no more power over, or brokenness of heart under thy usual corruptions? what? come down the Mount and break the Tables of Gods Law, assoon as thou art off the place? as deep in thy passion, as uneven in thy course as before? there is a sure decay of that inward heat which should and would (if in its right temper) suck some nourishment from these. 3.

Thirdly, by thy behaviour in thy worldly employments.

First when thy worldly occasions do not leave thee in so free and spiritual a disposition, to return into the presence of God as formerly; may be thou couldest have come from thy shop and family-employments to thy closet, and finde that they have kept thee in frame, yea, may be delivered thee up in a better frame for those duties; but now 'tis otherwise; thou canst not so shake them off, but they cleave to thy spirit, and give an earthly savour to thy praying and hearing; thou hast reason to bewail it; when nature decayes, men go more stooping, and 'tis a sign some such decay is in thee, that thou canst not as thou usest, lift up thy heart from earthly to spiritual duties. They were intended as helps against temptation, and therefore when they prove snares to us, there is a distemper on us. If we waxe worse after sleep, the body is not right, because the nature of sleep is to refresh; if exercise indisposeth for work, the reason is in our bodies: So here.

Secondly, when thy diligence in thy particular calling is more selfish; possibly thou hast wrought in thy shop, and set close at thy study, in obedience to the command chiefly; thy carnal interests

tereſts have ſwayed but little with thee, but now thou tradeſt more for thy ſelf, and leſſe for God. O have a care of this.

Thirdly, when thou canſt not bear the diſappointment of thy carnal ends in thy particular calling, as thou haſt done; thou workeſt and getteſt little of the world, thou preacheſt and art not much eſteemed, and thou knoweſt not well how to brook theſe. The time was thou couldeſt retire thy ſelf into God, and make up all thou didſt want elſewhere in him; but now thou art not ſo well ſatisfied with thy eſtate, rank and condition; thy heart is fingering for more of theſe than God allowes thee; this ſhews declining; children are harder to be pleaſed, and old men, (whoſe decay of nature makes them more froward, and in a manner children the ſecond time) than others; labour therefore to recover thy decaying grace, and as this lock grows, ſo thy ſtrength with it will, to acquieſce in the diſpoſure of Gods Providence.

CHAP. IV.

A word of Counſel for the recovery of declining grace.

WE come now to give a few directions to the Chriſtian, how to recover decaying grace.

Enquire faithfully into the cauſe of thy declining. The Chriſtians Armour decays two wayes; either by violent battery, when the Chriſtian is overcome by temptations to ſin; or elſe by neglecting to forbiſh and ſcoure it with the uſe of thoſe means which are as oile, to keep it clean and bright. Now enquire, which of theſe have been the cauſe of thy decay. It is like both concur.

1. Firſt, if thy grace be weakened by any blow, given it by any ſin committed by thee; there then lies a threefold duty upon thee towards the recovery of it.

Firſt, thou art to renew thy repentance. It is Chriſts counſel, *Rev.* 2. 5. to *Epheſus*, *Repent, and do thy firſt works*; where it is not only commanded as a duty, but preſcribed as a meanes for

for her recovery; as if he had said, Repent, that thou mayest do thy first works. Lo, *Hosea* 14. 2. The Lord sets back-sliding *Israel* about this work, bidding her *take words, and turn to the Lord*; and, v. 4. he then tells her he'll take her in hand to recover her of her sins, *I will heal their back-slidings*: a repenting soule is under promise of healing; and therefore (Christian) go and search thy heart, as thou wouldest do thy house, if some thief or murderer lay hid in it, to cut thy throat in the night; and when thou hast found the sin that has done thee the mischief, then labour to fill thy heart with shame for it, and indignation against it, and so go big with sorrow, and cast it forth before the Lord in a heart-breaking confession; better thou do this, than Satan do thy errand to God for thee.

Secondly, when thou hast renewed thy repentance, forget not, delay not then to renew thy faith on the promise for pardon. 2. Repentance that is like purging physick to evacuate the peccant humour; but if faith come not presently with its restorative, the poor creature will never get heart, or recover his strength. A soul may die of a fluxe of sorrow as well as of sin; faith hath an incarnating vertue, as they say of some strengthening meats; it feeds upon the promise, and *that is perfect, converting* (or rather restoring) *the soul*, Psal. 19. 7. Though thou wert pined to skin and bones, all thy strength wasted, yet faith would soon recruit thee, and enable every grace to perform its office chearfully. Faith sucks peace from the promise, call'd *peace in beleeving*; from peace flowes joy, *Being justified by faith we have peace with God*, Rom. 5. 1. and, *v.* 2. *We rejoyce in the hope of glory*; and joy affords strength: *The joy of the Lord is our strength.*

Thirdly, back both these with a daily endeavour to mortifie 3. those lusts which most prevail over thy grace. Weeds cannot thrive, and the flowers also; when grace doth not act vigorously and freely, conclude it is oppress with some contrary lust, which weighs down its spirits, and makes them lumpish; even as superfluous humours do load the natural spirits in our bodies, that we have little joy to stir or go about any businesse till they be evacuated; and therefore ply this work close; it is not a dayes work or two in the year, (like Physick at spring and fall) nothing more vain, than to make a bustle, as the Papists do at their *Lent*; or as some unsound Professours among our selves,

who seem to bestir themselves before a Sacrament or day of Fasting, with a great noise of zeal, and then let those very lusts live peaceably in them all the year after. No, this is child-play to do and undo; thou must *mortifie daily thy lusts by the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 13. Follow but this work conscionably in thy Christian course, making it thy endeavour, (as constantly as the labouring man goes out every day to work in the field where his calling lies) to watch thy heart, and use all means for the discovery of sin, and as it breaks forth to be humbled for it, and be chopping at the root of it with this axe of mortification; and thou shalt see by the blessing of God what a change for the better there will be in the constitution of thy grace; thou who art now so poor, so pale, that thou art afraid to see thy own face long in the glasse of thy own conscience, shalt then reflect with joy upon thy own conscience, and dare to converse with thy self without those suprizals of horrour and fear, which before did appale thee; thy grace, though it shall not be thy rejoycing, yet it will be thy evidence for Christ, in whom it is: and lead thee in with boldness to lay claim to him, while the loose Christian, whose grace is overgrown with lusts (for want of this weeding hook) shall stand trembling at the door, questioning ther his grace be true or no; and from that doubt of his welcome.

2. Secondly, if upon enquiry thou findest that thy Armour decays, rather for want of scouring, than by any blow from sin presumptuously committed, (as that is most common and ordinary, rust will soon spoil the best Armour, and negligence give grace its bane, as well as grosse sins) then apply thy self to the use of those means which God hath appointed for the strengthening grace; if the fire goes out by taking off the wood, what way to preserve it but by laying it on again?

1. First, I shall send thee to the Word of God, be more frequently conversant with it. *David* tells us, where he renewed his spiritual life, and got his soul so oft into a heavenly heat, when grace in him began to chill. *The Word* (he tells us) *quickned him*. This was the Sunny-bank he sate under. The Word draws forth the Christians grace, by presenting every one with an object suitable to act upon, this is of great power to rouze them up; as the coming in of a friend, makes us (though sleepy

py before) ſhake off all drouſineſſe to enjoy his company. Affections they are actuated when their object is before them; if we love a perſon, this is excited by ſight of him, or any thing that minds us of him; if we hate one, our blood riſeth much more againſt him when before us. Now the Word brings the Chriſtians graces and their object together. Here love may delight her ſelf with the beholding Chriſt, who is ſet out to life there in all his love and lovelineſſe; here the Chriſtian may ſee his ſins in a glaſs that will not flatter him; and can there any godly ſorrow be in the heart, any hatred of ſin, and not come forth, while the man is reading what they coſt Chriſt for him!

Secondly, from the Word go to meditation; this is as bellowes to the fire; that grace which lies choak't and eaten up for want of exerciſe, will by this be cleared and break forth; while thou art muſing this fire will burn, and thy heart grow hot within thee, according to the nature of the ſubject thy thoughts dwell upon: reſolve therefore (Chriſtian) to encloſe ſome time from all worldly Suitours, wherein thou mayeſt every day (if poſſible) at leaſt take a view of the moſt remarkable occurrences that have paſt between God and thee; Firſt, ask thy ſoul what takings it hath had that day, what mercies heaven hath ſent into thee, and do not when thou haſt askt the queſtion, (like *Pilate*) go out; but ſtay till thy ſoul has made report of Gods gracious dealings to thee: and (if thou beeſt wiſe to obſerve, and faithful to relate them) thy conſcience muſt tell thee, that the cock was never turn'd, the breaſt of mercy never put up all the day; yea, while thou art viewing theſe freſh mercies, telling over this new coyne, hot out of the Mint of Gods bounty, ancient mercies they will come crowding in upon thee, and call for a place in thy thoughts, and tell thee what God hath done for thee moneths and years ago, (and indeed old debts ſhould not be paid laſt) give them (Chriſtian) all a hearing one time or another, and thou ſhalt ſee how they will work upon thy ingenuous ſpirit. It is with the Chriſtian in this caſe, as with ſome Merchants ſervant that keeps his Maſters caſh; he tells his Maſter he hath a great ſumme of his by him, and deſires he would diſcharge him of it, and ſee how his accounts ſtand, but he can never finde him at leiſure. There is a great Treaſure of mercy alwayes in the Chriſtians hands, and conſcience is oft calling

the Christian to take the account, and see what God has done for him, but seldom it is, he can finde time to tell his mercies over; and is it any wonder that such should go behinde-hand in their spiritual estate, who take no more notice what the gracious dealings of God are with them? how can he be thankful that seldome thinks what he receives? or patient when God afflicts, that wants one of the most powerful Arguments to pacifie a mutinous spirit in trouble, and that is taken from the abundant good we receive at the hands of the Lord as well as a little evil? how can such a souls love flame to God, that is kept at such a distance from the mercies of God, which are fuel to it? and the like might be said of all the other graces. Secondly, reflect upon thy self, and bestow a few serious thoughts upon thy own behaviour, what it hath been towards God and man all along the day. Ask thy soul, as *Elisha* his servant, Whence comest thou, O my soul? where hast thou been? what hast thou done for God this day, and how? and when thou goest about this, look that thou neither beest taken off from a through search, (as *Jacob* was by *Rachels* specious excuse) not to be found to cocker thy self, (as *Eli* his sons) when thou shalt upon enquiry take thy heart tardy in any point of thy duty; take heed what thou doest, for thou judgest for God, who receives the wrong by thy sinne, and therefore will do himself justice if thou wilt not.

Thirdly, from meditation go to prayer; indeed a soul in meditation is on his way to prayer; that duty leads the Christian to this, and this brings help to that; when the Christian has done his utmost by meditation to excite his graces, and chafe his spirit into some divine heat, he knows all this is but to lay the wood in order. The fire must come from above to kindle, and this must be fetch't by prayer. They say, stars have greatest influences when they are in conjunction with the Sunne; then sure the graces of a Saint should never work more powerfully than in prayer, for then he is in the neareſt conjunction and communion with God. That Ordinance which hath such power with God, must needs have a mighty influence on our selves. It will not let God rest, but raiseth him up to his peoples succour, and is it any wonder if it be a means to rouze up and excite the Christians grace? how oft do we see a dark cloud upon *Davids* spirit at the beginning of his prayer, which

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by that time he is a little warm in his work, begins to clear up, and before he ends, breaks forth into high actings of faith and acclamations of praise? Only here (Christian) take heed of formal praying; this is as baneful to grace, as not praying. A plaister, though proper and of soveraign vertue, yet if it be laid on cold may do more hurt than good.

Fourthly, to all the former joyne fellowship and communion with the Saints thou livest amongst. No wonder to hear a house is robb'd that stands far from neighbours; he that walks in communion of Saints, he travels in company, he dwells in a City where one house keeps up another, to which *Jerusalem* is compared. 'Tis observable concerning the house in whose ruines *Jobs* children were entombed, that a winde came from the Wilderness and smote the foure corners of it; it seems it stood alone; the devil knowes what he does in hindering this great Ordinance of communion of Saints; in doing this, he hinders the progresse of grace, yea, brings that which Christians have, into a declining wasting state. The Apostle couples those two duties close together, *to hold fast our Profession, and to consider one another, and provoke unto love and to good works*, Heb. 10. 23, 24. Indeed it is a dangerous step to Apostasy, to forsake the communion of Saints; hence 'tis said of *Demas, he hath left us, and embraced the present world.* O what mischief has Satan done us in these few late years, in this one particular? what is become of this communion of Saints? where are there two or three to be found that can agree to walk together? those that could formerly suffer together, cannot sit together at their Fathers table, can hardly pray one with or one for another; the breath of one Christian is strange to another that once lay in his bosome; —— *This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.*

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The words opened, and what is meant by the evil day.

That ye may be able to withſtand in the evil day, and having done, &c.

WE come to the Argument with which the Apoſtle urgeth the Exhortation, and that is double.

The firſt hath reſpect to the houre of battel, *that ye may be able to withſtand in the evil day.*

The ſecond to the happy iſſue of the war, which will crown the Chriſtian thus arm'd, and that is certain victory, *and having done all to ſtand.*

Firſt of the firſt, *That ye may be able to withſtand in the evil day*; But what is this evil day? Some take this evil day to comprehend the whole life of a Chriſtian here below in this vale of teares; and then the Argument runs thus: Take to your ſelves the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to perſevere to the end of your life, which you will finde, as it were, one continued day of trouble and trial. Thus *Jacob* drawes a black line over his whole life, *Few and evil have the days of my life been*, Gen. 47. What day ſhines ſo fair that over-caſts not before night, nay, in which the Chriſtian meets not with ſome ſhower or other, enough to deſerve the name of an evil day? Every day hath its portion, yea, proportion; *Sufficient is the evil of the day.* We need not borrow and take up ſorrows upon uſe of the morrow, to make up our preſent load; as we read of daily bread, ſo of a daily croſſe, *Luke* 9. 24. which we are bid to take, not to make, (we need not make croſſes for our ſelves, as we are prone to do) God in his Providence will provide one for us; and we are bid to take it up, but we hear nothing of laying it down, till croſſe and we lie down together; our troubles and our lives are coetaneous, live and die together; here when joy comes, ſorrow is at its heel; ſtaffe and rod go together.

gether. *Job* himself, (whose prosperity the devil so grudg'd, and set forth in all his bravery and pomp, *Job.* 1. 10. as if his Sun had no shadow,) hear what account this good man gives of this his most flourishing time, *chap.* 3. 26. *I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet.* There were some troubles that broke his rest, when his bed was (to thinking) as soft as heart could wish, even now this good man tosses and tumbles from one side to the other, and is not quiet. If one should have come to *Job* and blessed him with his happy condition, and said, Surely, *Job*, thou couldest be content with what thou hast for thy portion, if thou mightest have all this setled on thee and thy heires after thee; he would have said, as once *Luther*, that God should not put him off with these. Such is the Saints state in this bottome, that their very life here, and all the pompous entertainments of it, they are their crosse, because they detain them from their Crown. We need nothing to make our life an evil day more than our absence from our chief good; which cannot be recompenced by the world, nor enjoyed with it. Only this goodnesse there is in this evil, that it is short; our life is but an evil day, it will not last long; and sure it was mercy that God hath abridged so much of the term of mans life in these last dayes, wherein so much of Christ and Heaven are discovered, that it would have put the Saints patience hard to it, to have known so much of the upper worlds glory, and then be kept so long from it, as the Fathers in the first age were. O comfort one another (Christians) with this; though your life be evil with troubles, yet 'tis short; a few steps, and you are out of the rain. There is great difference between a Saint in regard of the evils he meets with, and the wicked; as two Travellers riding contrary wayes, (both taken in the rain and wet) but one rides from the rain, and so is soon out of the showre; but the other rides into the rainy corner, the further he goes, the worse he is. The Saint he meets with troubles as well as the wicked, but he is soon out of the showre; when death comes, he has fair weather: but the wicked, the further he goes the worse; what he meets with here, is but a few drops, the great storme is the last. The pouring out of Gods wrath shall be in hell, where all the deeps of horrour are opened, both from above of Gods righteous fury, and from beneath of their own accusing and tormenting consciences.

Secondly,

2. Secondly, others take the phrase in a more restrained sense, to denote those particular seasons of our life, wherein more especially we meet with afflictions and sufferings. *Beza* reades it *tempore adverso*, in the time of our adversity. Though our whole life be evil, if compared with heavens blisseful state, our clearest day, night to that glorious morning; yet one part of our life compared with another, may be called good, and the other evil; we have our vicissitudes here. The Providences of God to his Saints here, while on this low bottome of earth, are mixt and particoloured, as was signified by the *speckled horses* in *Zechariahs* vision; Red and white, peace and war, joy and sorrow checker our days. Earth is a middle place betwixt heaven and hell, and so is our state here; it partakes of both: we go up hill and down till we get to our journeys end, yea, we find the deepest slough nearest our fathers house. Death, I mean, into which all the other troubles of our life fall, as streames into some great River, and with which they all end, and are swallowed up. This being the comprehensive evil, I conceive to be meant here, being made remarkable by a double article ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ πονηρᾷ, that day, that evil day, not excluding those other dayes of tribulation which intervene; These are but so many petty deaths, every one snatching away a piece of our lives with them, or like Pages sent before to usher in this King of terrours that comes behind.

Ezek. 1. 8.

The phrase being opened; let us consider the strength of this first Argument, with which the Apostle reinforceth his Exhortation, of taking to our selves the whole Armour of God, and that consists in three weighty circumstances.

1. First, the nature and quality of this day of affliction, it is an evil day.

2. Secondly, the unavoidablenesse of this evil day of affliction, implied in the form of speech, *that you may withstand in the evil day.* He shuts our all hope of escaping, as if he had said, you have no way but to withstand, please not your selves with thoughts of shunning battel; the evil day must come, be you arm'd or not arm'd.

3. Thirdly, the necessity of this Armour, *to withstand.* As we cannot run from it, so not bear up before it, and oppose the force which will be made against us, except clad with Armour. These would

would afford several points, but for brevity we shall lay them together in one Conclusion.

CHAP. VI.

Sheweth that the day of affliction is evil, and in what respects, as also unavoidable, and why to be prepared for.

IT behoves every one to arme and prepare himself for the evil day of affliction and death, which unavoidably he must conflict with. The point hath three branches. *Doct.*

First, the day of affliction and death is an evil day.

Secondly, this evil day is unavoidable.

Thirdly, it behoves every one to provide for this evil day.

First of the first branch, the day of affliction, especially death is an evil day. Here we must shew how affliction is evil, and how not. 1.

First, it is not morally or intrinsecally evil; If it were evil in this sense, First, God could not be the Authour of it; his nature is so pure, that no such evil can come from him, any more than the Sunnes light can make night. But this evil of affliction he voucheth for his own act, *Against this family do I devise an evil*, Mica 3. 2. yea more, he impropriates it so to himself, as that he will not have us think any can do us evil beside himself. 'Tis the Prerogative he glories in, that there is no evil in the City, but it is of his doing, *Amos* 3.6. And well it is for the Saints that their crosses are all made in heaven, they would not else be so fitted to their backs as they are. But for the evil of sin, he disownes it with a strict charge, that we lay not this brat, which is begotten by Satan upon our impure hearts, at his door; *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man*, James 1. 13. 1.

Secondly, if affliction were intrinsecally evil, it could in

no respect be the object of our desire, which sometimes it is and may be. We are to choose affliction rather than sin, yea, the greatest affliction before the least sin. *Moses* chose affliction with the people of God, rather than the pleasures of sin for a season. We are bid rejoyce when we fall into divers temptations, that is, afflictions.

But in what respects then may the day of affliction be called evil?

1. First, as it is grievous to sense, in Scripture, evil is oft put as contradistinct to joy and comfort: *We looked for peace, and behold no good.* A merry heart is called a good heart, a sad spirit an evil spirit, because nature hath an abhorrency to all that opposeth its joy, and this every affliction doth more or lesse. No affliction, Heb. 12. 11. while present is joyous, but grievous; it hath like Physick, an unpleasing farewel to the sense. Therefore *Solomon*, speaking of the evil dayes of sickness, expresseth them to be so distasteful to nature, that we shall say, *We have no pleasure in them.* They take away the joy of our life. Natural joy is a true flower of the Sun of prosperity, it opens and shuts with it. 'Tis true indeed, the Saints never have more joy than in their affliction, but this comes in upon another score; they have a good God that sends it in, or else they would be as sadly on it as others. 'Tis no more natural for comfort to spring from afflictions, than for grapes to grow on thornes, or Manna in the wilderness. The Israelites might have look't long enough for such bread, if heaven had not miraculously rained it down. God chooseth this season to make the omnipotency of his love the more conspicuous. As *Elijah* to adde to the miracle, first causeth water in abundance to be poured upon the wood and sacrifice, so much as to fill the trench, and then brings fire from heaven by his prayer, to lick it up: Thus God poures out the flood of affliction upon his children, and then kindles that inward joy in their bosomes which licks up all their sorrow, yea, he makes the very waters of affliction they float on, adde a further sweetness to the musick of their spiritual joy; but still it is God that is good, and affliction that is evil.

2. Secondly, the day of affliction is an evil day, as it is an unwelcome remembrancer of what sinful evils have passed in our lives. It revives the memory of old sins, which it may be, were buried

buried many years ago in the grave of forgetfulneſſe. The night of affliction is the time when ſuch ghoſts uſe to walk in mens conſciences; and as the darkneſſe of the night addes to the horrour of any ſcareful object, ſo doth the ſtate of affliction (which is it ſelfe uncomfortable) adde to the terrour of our ſinnes then remembred. Never did the Patriarchs ſin look ſo ghaſtly on them, as when it recoil'd upon them in their diſtreſſe, *Gen.* 42. 21. The ſinner then hath more real apprehenſions of wrath than at another time; affliction approximates judgement, yea, it is interpreted by him, as a Purſevant ſent to call him preſently before God, and therefore muſt needs begt a woful confuſion and conſternation in his ſpirit. O that men would think of this, how they could bear the ſight of their ſins, and a Rehearſal Sermon of all their wayes in that day! That is the bleſſed man indeed, who can with the Prophet then look on them, and triumph over them. This indeed is a dark parable, as he calls it, few can skill of it, as *Pſ.* 49. 4, 5. *I will open my dark ſaying upon the harp; wherefore ſhould I feare in the day of evil, when the iniquity of my heels compaſſeth me about?*

Thirdly, the day of affliction makes diſcovery of much evil to be in the heart, which was not ſeen before. Affliction ſhakes and royles the creature; if any ſediment be at the bottome it will appear then. Sometimes it diſcovers the heart to be quite naught, that before had ſome ſeeming good; theſe ſuds waſh off the hypocrites paint. *Natura vexata prodit ſeipſam.* When corrupt nature is vext it ſhews it ſelf, and ſome afflictions do that to purpoſe. We reade of ſuch as are offended when perſecution comes; they fall quite out with their Profeſſion, becauſe it puts them to ſuch coſt and trouble; others in their diſtreſſe that curſe their God, *Iſa.* 8. 21. It is impoſſible for a naughty heart to think well of an afflicting God. The hireling, if his Maſter takes up a ſtaffe to beat him, throws down his work and runs away; and ſo doth a falſe heart ſerve God. Yea, even where the perſon is gracious, corruption is oft found to be ſtronger, and grace weaker than they were thought to be. *Peter*, who ſet out ſo valiantly at firſt to walk on the ſea, the winde doth but riſe and he begins to ſink; now he ſees there was more unbelief in his heart than he before ſuſpected. Sharp afflictions are to the ſoul as a driving raine to the houſe; we know not that there are 3.

such crannies and holes in the house, till we see it drop down here and there. Thus we perceive not how unmortified this corruption, not how weak that grace is, till we are thus search't, and made more fully to know what is in our hearts by such trials. This is the reason why none have such humble thoughts of themselves, and such pitiful and forbearing thoughts towards others in their infirmities; as those who are most acquainted with afflictions; they meet with so many foiles in their conflicts, as make them carry a low sail in respect of their own grace, and a tender respect to their brethren, more ready to pity than censure them in their weaknesses.

4. Fourthly, this is the season when the evil one Satan comes to tempt. What we finde call'd the time of tribulation, *Matth.* 13. 22. we finde in the same parable, *Luke* 8. 13. call'd the time of temptation. Indeed they both meet; seldom doth God afflict us, but Satan addeth temptation to our wilderneſſe; *This is your houre* (saith Christ) *and the power of darkneſſe*, Luke 25. 53. Christs sufferings from man, and temptation from the devil came together. *Esau*, who hated his brother for the blessing, said in his heart, *The dayes of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I kill my brother*, Gen. 27. 41. Times of affliction are the dayes of mourning, those Satan waits for to do us a mischief in.

5. Fifthly and lastly, the day of affliction hath oft an evil event and issue, and in this respect proves an evil day indeed. All is well (we say) that ends well; the product of afflictions on the Christian is good; the rod with which they are corrected, yields the peaceable fruits of righteousneſſe, and therefore they can call their afflictions good; that is a good instrument that lets out only the bad blood. *It is good for me that I was afflicted*, saith *David*. I have read of a holy woman, who used to compare her afflictions to her children; they both put her to great pain in the bearing; but as she knew not which of her children to have been without (for all the trouble in the bringing forth) so neither which of her afflictions she could have missed, notwithstanding the sorrow they put her to in the enduring. But to the wicked the issue is sad; first in regard of sin, they leave them worse, more impenitent, hardened in sin, and outragious in their wicked practices. Every plague on *Egypt* added to the plague of hardneſſe on

Pharaohs

Pharaohs heart: he that for some while could beg prayers of *Moses* for himself, at last comes to that passe, that he threatens to kill him if he come at him any more. O what a prodigious height do we see many come to in sin after some great sickness or other judgement! Children do not more shoot up in their bodily stature after an ague, than they in their lusts after afflictions. O how greedy and ravenous are they after their prey, when they once get off their clog and chain from their heeles! when Physick works not kindly, it doth not only leave the disease uncured, but the poison of the Physick stayes in the body also: Many appear thus poisoned by their afflictions, by the breaking out of their lusts afterward. Secondly, in regard of sorrow, every affliction on a wicked person produceth another, and that a greater than it selfe. The greatest wedge comes the last, which shall rive him fit for the fire; the sinner is whip't from affliction to affliction, as the vagrant from Constable to Constable till at last he comes to hell, his proper place and setled abode, where all sorrows will meet in one that is endlesse.

The second branch of the point follows. This evil day is unavoidable. We may as well stop the chariot of the Sun, when posting to night, and chase away the shades of the evening, as escape this houre of darkness that is coming upon us all. *None hath power over the Spirit to retain it, neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no discharge in that war*, Eccles. 8. 8. Among men 'tis possible to get off when prest for the wars, by pleading priviledge of yeares, estate, weakness of body, protection from the Prince, and the like, or if all these fail, possibly the sending another in our room, or a bribe given in the hand may serve the turn. But in this war the presse is so strict, that there is no dispensation; *David* could willingly have gone for his son, we hear him crying, *Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son*: but he will not be taken, that young gallant must go himself. We must in our own person come into the field, and look death in the face. Some indeed we finde so fond as to promise themselves immunity from this day, as if they had an ensuring office in their breast. They say they have made a Covenant with death, and with hell they are at an agreement, when the overflowing scourge shall passe through it shall not come unto them. And now (like debtors that have feed the Serjeant) they walk

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abroad boldly and feare no arrest. But God tells them as fast as they binde he will loose: *Your Covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand*; and how should it if God will not set his seal to it? There is a divine Law for this evil day, which came in force upon *Adams* first sin; that laid the fatal knife to the throat of mankinde, which hath opened a sluce to let out his heart-blood ever since. God to prevent all escape hath sowen the seeds of death in our very constitution and nature, so that we can assoon run from our selves, as run from death. We need no feller to come with a hand of violence, and hew us down; there is in the tree a worme which grows out of its own substance that will destroy it; so in us, those infirmities of nature that will bring us down to the dust. Our death was bred when our life was first conceived; and as a breeding woman cannot hinder the houre of her travel, (that follows in nature upon the other) so neither can man hinder the bringing forth of death with which his life is big. All the pains and aches man feels in his life are but so many *singultus morientis naturæ*, groans of dying nature; they tell him his dissolution is at hand. Beest thou a Prince sitting in all thy state and pomp, death dare enter thy Palace, and come through all thy guards, to deliver the fatal message it hath from God to thee, yea, runs its dagger to thy heart; wert thou compassed with a Colledge of Doctors consulting thy health, Art and Nature both must deliver thee up when that comes. Even when thy strength is firmest, and thou eatest thy bread with a merry heart, that very food which nourisheth thy life, gives thee withal an earnest of death, as it leaves those dregs in thee which will in time procure the same. O how unavoidable must this evil day of death be, when that very staffe knocks us down to the grave at last, which our life leans on, and is preserved by! God owes a debt both to the first *Adam* and second; to the first he owes the wages of his sin: to the second, the reward of his sufferings. The place for full payment of both is the other world, so that except death comes to convey man thither, the wicked who are the posterity of the first *Adam*, will misse of that full pay for their sins, which the threatening makes due debt, and engageth God to perform; The godly also who are the seed of Christ, these should not receive the whole purchase of his blood,

blood, which he would never have shed but upon the credit of that promise of eternal life, which God gave him for them before the world began; This is the reason why God hath made this day so sure; in it he dischargeth both bonds.

The third branch of the point follows, That it behoves every one to prepare, and effectually to provide for this evil day, which so unavoidably impends us: And that upon a twofold account; First, in point of duty. Secondly, in point of wisdome. 3.

First, in point of duty. First, it is upon our allegiance to the great God, that we provide and arme our selves against this day. Suppose a subject were trusted with one of his Princes castles, and this man should heare that a puissant enemy was coming to lay siege to this castle, yet takes no care to lay in armes and provision for his defence, and so 'tis lost, how could such a one be clear'd of treason? doth he not basely betray the place, and with it his Princes honour into the enemyes hand? Our souls are this castle which we are every one to keep for God. We have certain intelligence that Satan hath a design upon them, and the time when he intends to come with all his powers of darknesse, to be that evil day. Now as we would be found true to our trust, we are obliged to stand upon our defence, and store our selves with what may enable us to make a vigorous resistance. 1.

Secondly, we are obliged to provide for that day, as a suitable return for, and improvement of the opportunityes and means which God affords us for this very end. We cannot without shameful ingratitude to God, make waste of those helps God gives us in order to this great work. Every one would cry out upon him that should basely spend that money upon riot in prison, which was sent him to procure his deliverance out of prison; And do we not blush to bestow those talents upon our lusts and Satan, which God graciously indulgeth to deliver us from them, and his rage in a dying houre? what have we Bibles for, Ministers and preaching for, if we mean not to furnish our selves by them with armour for the evil day? In a word, what is the intent of God in lengthening out our dayes, and continuing us some while here in the land of the living? was it that we might have time to revel or rather ravel out upon the 2.

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pleasure of this vain world? Doth he give us our precious time to be employed in catching such butterflies as these earthly honours and riches are? It cannot be. Masters do not use (if wise) to set their servants about such work as will not pay for the candle they burne in doing it. And truly nothing lesse than the glorifying of God, and saving our souls at last can be worth the precious time we spend here. The great God hath a greater end than most think in this dispensation: If we would judge aright, we should take his own interpretation of his actions; and the Apostle *Peter* bids us, *count that the long-suffering of the Lord is salvation*, 2 Pet. 3. 15. which place he quotes out of *Paul*, (as the sense, though not in the same forme of words) which in *Rom.* 2. 4. are these, *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodnesse, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance*? From both places we are taught what is the minde of God, and the language he speaks to us in by every moments patience, and inch of time that is granted to us. It is a space given for repentance. God sees (as we are) death and judgment could bring no good news to us, we are in no case to welcome the evil day, and therefore mercy stands up to plead for the poor creature in Gods bosome, and begs a little time more may be added to its life, that by this indulgence it may be provoked to repent before he be called to the bar. Thus we come by every day that is continually superadded to our time on earth. And doth not this lay a strong obligation on us to lay out every point of this time, unto the same end 'tis begged for.

2. Secondly, in point of wisdome. The wisdom of a man appears most eminently in two things.

First, in the matter of his choice and chief care.

Secondly, in a due timing of this his choice and care.

1. First, a wise man makes choice of that for the subject of his chief care and endeavour, which is of greatest importance and consequence to him; fools and children only are intent about toys and trifles. They are as busie and earnest in making of a house of dirt or cards, as *Solomon* was in making of his Temple. Those poor babies are as adequate to their foolish apprehensions, as great enterprises are to wise men. Now such is the importance of the evil day, especially that of death, that it proves a man a fool,

fool, or wise, as he comports himself to it. The end specifies every action, and gives it the name of good or evil, of wise or foolish. The evil day of death is as the end of our dayes, so to be the end of all the actions of our life. Such will our life be found at last, as it hath been in order to this one day. If the several Items of our life (counsels and projects that we have pursued) when they shall then be cast up, will amount to a blessed death, then we shall appear to be wise men indeed; but if after all our goodly plots and policies for other things, we be unprovided for that houre, we must be content to die fools at last; And no such fool as the dying fool. The Christian goes for the fool (in the worlds account) while he lives; but when death comes, the wise world will then confesse they miscall'd him, and shall take it to themselves; *We fools counted his life to be madnesse, and his end to be without honour. But how is he now numbred among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints? therefore have we erred from the way of truth*, Wisd. 5. 4, 5. The place is Apocryphal, but sinners will finde the matter of it Canonical. 'Tis true indeed, Saints are out-witted by the world in the things of the world, and no marvel; neither doth it impeach their wisdome any more, than it doth a Scholars, to be excell'd by the Cobler in his mean trade. Nature, where it intends higher excellencies, is more careless in those things that are inferiour, as we see in man, who (being made to excel the beasts in a rational soul) is himself excell'd by some beast or other in all his senses. Thus the Christian may well be surpast in matters of worldly commerce, because he hath a nobler object in his eye, that makes him converse with the things of the world in a kind of non-attendance; he is not much careful in these matters; if he can die well at last, and be justified for a wise man at the day of the resurrection, all is well; he thinks it is not manners, to be unwilling to stay so long for the clearing of his wisdom, as God can wait for the vindicating of his own glorious Nature, which will not appear in its glory till that day, when he will convince the ungodly of their hard thoughts and speeches of him. Then they shall, till then they will not be convinced. Jude 2. 15.

2. Secondly, a wise man labours duly to time his care and endeavour for the attaining of what he proposeth. 'Tis the fool that comes when the market is done; as the evil day is of great con-

cernment in reſpect of its event, ſo the placing of our care for it in the right ſeaſon is of chief importance, and that ſure muſt be before it comes. There are more doors than one, at which the meſſenger may enter that brings evil tydings to us, and at which he will knock we know not; we know not where we ſhall be arreſted, whether at bed or board, whether at home or in the field, whether among our friends that will counſel and comfort us, or among our enemies that will adde weight to our ſorrow by their cruelty. We know not when, whether by day or night, (many of us) not, whether in the morning, noon, or evening of our age. As he calls to work at all times of the day, ſo he doth to bed; may be while thou art praying or preaching, and it would be ſad to go away profaning them and the Name of God in them; poſſibly when thou art about worſe work, death may ſtrike thy quaffing cup out of thy hand, while thou art ſitting in the Alehouſe with thy jovial mates, or meet thee as thou art reeling home, and make ſome ditch thy grave, that as thou livedſt like a beaſt, ſo thou ſhouldeſt dye like a beaſt. In a word, we know not the kinde of evil God will uſe as the inſtrument to ſtab us; whether ſome bloody hand of violence ſhall do it, or a diſeaſe out of our bowels and bodyes; whether ſome acute diſeaſe, or ſome lingring ſickneſſe; whether ſuch a ſickneſſe as ſhall ſlay the man while the body is alive, (I meane take the head and deprive us of our reaſon) or not; whether ſuch noiſome troubles as ſhall make our friends afraid to let us breath on them, or themſelves look on us; whether they ſhall be afflictions aggravated with Satans temptations, and the terrours of our own affrighted conſciences or not; who knows where, when, or what the evil day ſhall be? therefore doth God conceal theſe, that we ſhould provide for all. *Ceſar* would never let his ſouldiers know, when or whither he meant to march. The knowing of theſe would torment us with diſtracting fear, the not knowing them ſhould awaken us to a providing care. It is an ill time to calk the ſhip, when at ſea, tumbling up and down in a ſtorme. This ſhould have been look't to, when on her ſeat in the harbour. And as bad it is to begin to trim a ſoul for heaven, when toſſing upon a ſick bed. Things that are done in a hurry are ſeldome done well; A man call'd out of his bed at midnight with a diſmal fire on his houſe-top, cannot

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ſtand to dreſſe himſelfe in order as at another time; but runs down with one ſtocking half on may be, and the other not on at all. Thoſe poor creatures I am afraid go in as ill a dreſſe into another world, who begin to provide for it, when on a dying bed conſcience calls them up with a cry of hell-fire in their boſomes: But (alas!) they muſt go, though they have not time to put their armour on. And ſo they are put to repent at leiſure in hell, of their ſhuffling up a repentance in haſte here. We come to the Application of the point.

CHAP. VII.

The Application of the Point.

Uſe 1. FIrſt, it reproves thoſe that are ſo far from providing for the evil day, that they will not ſuffer any thoughts of that day to ſtay with them, they are as unwilling to be led into a diſcourſe of this ſubject, as a childe is to be carried into the dark, and there left. It is a death to them to think of death, or that which leads to it. As ſome fooliſhly think, they muſt needs dye preſently when they have made their Will, ſo theſe think they haſten that ſorrowful day by muſing on it. The meditation of it is no more welcome to them, than the company of *Moſes* was to *Pharaoh*. Therefore they ſay to it as he to *Moſes*, *Get thee from me, and let me ſee thy face no more*; the feare of it makes them to butcher and make away all thoſe thoughts which conſcience ſtirs up concerning it. And at laſt they get ſuch a maſtery of their conſciences, that they arrive to a kinde of Atheiſme; it is as rare to have them think or ſpeak of ſuch matters, as to ſee a flye buſie in Winter. Nothing now but what is frolick and jocund is entertained by them. If any ſuch thoughts come as propheſie mirth and carnal content, theſe (as right with their hearts) are taken up into the chariot to ſit with them, but all other are commanded to go behinde. Alas, poor-ſpirited wretches! ſomething might be ſaid for you, if this evil day of death and judgement were ſuch *entia rationis*, as had no foundation or being but what our fancies give them, (ſuch troubles there are in the world,

which have all their evil from our thoughts; when we are diſquieted with the ſcorns and reproaches of men, did we but not think of them they were nothing) but thy baniſhing the thoughts of this evil day from thy mind, will be a poor ſhort relief. Thou canſt neither hinder its coming, nor take away its ſting when it comes by the ſlighting it. Thou art like a Paſſenger in a ſhip, ſleep or wake, thou art going thy voyage. Thou doeſt but like that ſilly bird, who puts her head into a reed, and then thinks ſhe is ſafe from the Fowler becauſe ſhe ſees him not. Thou art a faire mark for Gods vengeance, he ſees thee, and is taking his aime at thee, when thou ſeeſt not him; yea, thou putteſt thy ſelf under an inevitable neceſſity of periſhing, by not thinking of this day. The firſt ſtep to our ſafety, is conſideration of our danger.

Uſe 2. It reproves thoſe, who if they think of the evil day, yet it is ſo far off, that it is to little purpoſe. They will be ſure to ſet it at ſuch a diſtance from them, as ſhall take away the force of the meditation, that it ſhall not ſtrike them down in the deep ſenſe and fear of it. That cannon, which if we ſtood at the mouth of it would ſhatter limb from limb, will not ſo much as ſcare them that get out of its reach. The further we put the evil day, the weaker impreſſion it makes on us. 'Tis true (ſay ſinners) it cannot be help't, we owe a debt to nature, it muſt be paid; ſickneſſe will come, and death follow on that, and judgement brings up the reare of both. But (alas!) they look not for theſe gueſts yet, they propheſy of theſe things a great while hence to come. Many a faire day they hope will intervene. Thus men are very kind to themſelves. Firſt, they wiſh it may be long before it comes, and then becauſe they would have it ſo, they are bold to promiſe themſelves it ſhall be ſo; and when once they have made this promiſe, no wonder if they then live after the rate of their vain hopes, putting off the ſtating of their accounts, till the winter-evening of old age, when they ſhall not have ſuch allurement to gad abroad from the pleaſures of this life. O then they will do great matters to fit them for the evil day. Bold man! who gave thee leave to cut out ſuch large thongs of that time which is not thine but Gods? Who makes the Leaſe, the Tenant or the Landlord? or doeſt thou forget thou farmeſt thy life, and art not an Owner? This is the device of Satan, to make you delay, whereas a preſent

preſent expectation of the evil day, would not let you ſit *ſtill* unprepared. O why do you let your ſouls from their work, make them idle and reſt from their burdens, by telling them of long life, while death chop in upon you unawares? O what ſhame will your whoriſh hearts be put to, (that now ſay your husband is gone afar off, you may fill your ſelves with loves) if he ſhould come before he is look't for, and find you in bed with luſts? And let me tell you, ſudden deſtruction is threatned, eſpecially to ſuch ſecure ones. Reade *Matth.* 24, 48, 50, 51. where 'tis denounced againſt that ſort of ſinners, who pleaſe themſelves with their Lords delaying his coming, that *the Lord of that ſervant ſhall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an houre that he is not aware of.* Indeed God muſt go out of his ordinary road of dealing with ſinners, if ſuch ſcape a ſudden ruine. One is bold to challenge any to ſhew a Preſident in Scripture of any that are brauded for ſecurity, that ſome remarkable yea ſudden judgement did not ſurpriſe. *Sodom*, how ſoon after a Sun-ſhine morning did the heavens thicken, and bury them in a few houres, (by a ſtorme of fire) in their own aſhes? Careleſſe *Laiſh* cut off before they almoſt think of it. *Agag*, when he ſaw the clouds of his fears break, and faire weather was in his countenance, they return immediately upon him, and ſhut him up in death; he is preſently hewen in pieces. *Amalek* ſlaughtered by *David* before the triumph of their late victory was cold. *Nebuchadnezzar* ſtrutting himſelf in his Palace with this bravado in his mouth, *Is not this great Babylon that I have built?* and before he can get the words out of his throat, there is another voyce falling from heaven, ſaying, *O King, to thee be it ſpoken, thy Kingdome is departed from thee: and the ſame houre it was fulfill'd*, and he ſent to graze with the beaſts. *Dives* bleſſing himſelf for many years, and within a few houres the pillow is pluck't from under his head, and you heare no more of him, till out of hell he roare; yea, a whole world, (few perſons excepted) drowned, and they not know till the day the flood came, *Mat.* 24. 29. and ſwept them all away: And who art thou, O man, that promiſeſt thy ſelf an exemption, when Kings, Cityes, a whole world have been ruined after this ſort? Dan. 4. 31, 33.

This reproves thoſe, who indeed think oft of this evil day, (much againſt their will,) by reaſon of an awakened conſcience, *Uſe* 3.

that is ever pinching of them, and preaching on *Pauls* text (before *Felix*) to them, till it makes them tremble as he did; yet ſuch is the power of luſt in their hearts, that it makes them ſpur on, notwithſtanding all the rebukes conſcience gives them, and affrighting thoughts they have of the evil day; yet they continue in their old trade of ſin deſperately. Theſe wretches are the objects of our ſaddeſt pity. The ſecure ſinner (that has broke priſon from his conſcience,) is like a ſtrong-brain'd drunkard, he ſwallows down his ſin, (as the other doth his drink) with pleaſure, and is not ſtirr'd at all; but here is a man that is ſtomack-ſick, (as I may ſo ſay) his conſcience is oft diſgorging his ſweet draughts, and yet he will ſinne, though with pain and anguiſh. O conſider (poor wretches) what you do, inſtead of arming your ſelves againſt the evil day, you arme the evil day againſt your ſelves; you are ſticking the bed with pins and needles, on which you muſt ere long be laid; you are throwing billets into that fiery furnace, wherein at laſt you ſhall be caſt, and all this in ſpight of your conſciences, which yet God mercifully ſets in your way, that the prickings of them may be as a hedge of thornes, to keep thee from the purſuit of thy luſts. Know therefore, if thou wilt go on, that as thy conſcience takes from the pleaſure of thy ſin at preſent, ſo it will adde to the horrour of thy torment hereafter.

Uſe 4. It reproves thoſe, who though they are not ſo violent and outragious in ſin, to make them ſtink above ground in the noſtrils of others, yet reſt in an unarm'd condition; they do not flie to Chriſt for covering and ſhelter againſt this day of ſtorme and tempeſt, and the reaſon is, they have a lie in their right hand, they feed on aſhes, and a deceived heart carries them aſide from ſeeking after Chriſt. It would make one tremble to ſee how confident many are with their falſe hopes and ſelf-confidences, daring to come up (as *Corah* with his Cenſer, as undauntedly as *Moſes* himſelf) even to the mouth of the grave, till on a ſudden they are ſwallowed up with deſtruction, and ſent to be undeceiv'd in hell, who would not be beaten from their refuges of lies here; whoever thou art, O man, and whatever thou haſt to glory in, were it the moſt Saint-like converſation that ever any lived on earth, yet if this be thy ſhelter againſt the evil day, thou wilt periſh. No ſalvation when that flood comes but Chriſt; yea, being

being in Christ, hanging on the out-side of the Ark by a specious Profession, will not save; Me thinks I see how those of the old world ran for their lives, some to this hill, and others to that high tree, and how the waves pursued them, till at last they were swept into the devouring flood. Such will your end be, that turn any other way for help than to Christ; yet the Ark waits on you, yea, comes up close to your gate to take you in. *Noah* did not put forth his hand more willingly to take in the Dove, than Christ doth to receive those who flie to him for refuge. O reject not your own mercies for lying vanity.

Use 5. Let it put thee upon the enquiry (whoever thou art,) whether thou beest in a posture of defence for this evil day. Ask thy soul soberly and solemnly, Art thou provided for this day, this evil day? how couldest thou part with what that will take away, and welcome what it will certainly bring? Death comes with a voider to carry away all thy carnal enjoyments, and to bring thee up a reckoning for them. O canst thou take thy leave of the one, and with peace and confidence read the other? will it not affright thee to have thy health and strength turn'd into faintnesse and feebleness, thy sweet nights of rest, into waking eyes, and restlesse tossings up and down; thy voice that has so often chanted to the viol, to be now acquainted to no other tune but sighs and groans. O how canst thou look upon thy sweet and dear relations with thoughts of removing from them? yea, behold the instrument, as it were, whetting that shall give the fatal stroak to sever soul and body? think that thou wert now half dead in thy members, that are most remote from the fountain of life, and death to have but a few moments journey, before it arrive to thy heart, and so beat thy last breath out of thy body. Possibly the inevitable necessity of these do make thee to harden thy self against them; this might indeed in some Heathen, that is not resolv'd whether there be another world or no, help a little to blunt the edge of that terrour which otherwise would cut deeper into his amazed heart. But if thou believest another world, and that judgment which stands at deaths back, ready to allot thee thy unchangeable state in blisse or misery; surely thou canst not relieve thy awakened conscience with such a poor cordial. O therefore think what answer thou meanest to give unto the great God, at thy appearing before him,

him, when he ſhall ask thee, what thou canſt ſay, why the ſentence of eternal damnation ſhould not then be pronounced againſt thee. Truly we deal unfaithfully with our own ſouls, if we bring not our thoughts to this iſſue. If now you ſhould ask how you ſhould provide againſt the evil day, ſo that you may ſtand before that dreadful bar, and live ſo in the mean time, that you might not be under a ſlaviſh bondage, through the fearful expectation of it; Take it in a few directions.

1. Firſt, if ever you would have a bleſſed iſſue of this evil day, ſo as to ſtand in judgment before the great God, reſt not till thou haſt got into a Covenant-relation with Chriſt. Dying *Davids* living comfort was drawn from the Covenant God had made with him; this was all his deſire, and all his ſalvation; how canſt thou put thy head into the other world without horrour, if thou haſt not ſolid ground that Chriſt will own thee for his? Heaven hath its proper heires, and ſo hath hell. The heires of heaven are ſuch as are in Covenant with God. The foundation of it was laid in a Covenant, and all the manſions there are prepared for a people in Covenant with him; *Gather my Saints together that have made a Covenant with me.* But how mayeſt thou get into this Covenant-relation? Firſt, break thy Covenant with ſin. Thou art by nature a Covenant-ſervant to ſin and Satan; may be thou haſt not expreſly in words and formally as Witches ſeal'd this Covenant, yet virtually as thou haſt done the work of Satan, and been at the command of thy luſts, accepting the reward of unrighteouſneſſe, (the pleaſure and carnal advantages they have paid thee in for the ſame) therein thou haſt declared thy ſelf to be ſo. Now if ever thou wilt be taken into Covenant with God, break this; a Covenant with hell and heaven cannot ſtand together.

2. Secondly, betroth thy ſelf to Chriſt. The Covenant of grace is the joynture which God ſettles only upon Chriſts Spouſe. *Rebeccah* had not the Jewels and coſtly rayment till ſhe was promiſed to become *Iſaaks* wife, *Gen.* 24. 53. *All the Promiſes are Yea and Amen in Chriſt.* If once thou receiveſt Chriſt, with him thou receiveſt them. He that owes the tree hath right to all the fruit that is on it. Now that thou mayeſt not huddle up a marriage between Chriſt and thee, ſo as to be diſown'd of Chriſt,

Christ, and it prove a nullity at last; it behooves thee to look to it, that there be found in thee what Christ expects in every soul that he espouseth. First therefore consider whether thou canst heartily love the person of Christ. Look wishly on him again and again as he is set forth in all his spiritual excellencies; are they such as thy heart can close with? doth his holy nature and all those heavenly graces with which he is beautified, render him desireable to thee? or couldest thou like him better if he were not so precise and exactly holy? yea, is thy heart so inflamed with a desire of him, that thou canst love him with a conjugal love? A woman may love one as a friend, whom she cannot love so as to make him her husband. A friendly love may stand with a love of some other equal to it, yea, superiour; But a conjugal love is such as will bear neither: canst thou finde in thy heart to forsake all other, and cleave to Christ? does thy heart speak thee ready, and present thee willing to go with thy sweet Jesus, though he carry thee from father and fathers house? Is thy confidence such of his power to protect thee from all thy enemyes, sin, wrath and hell, that thou canst resolvedly put the life of thy soul into his hands, to be saved by the sole vertue of his blood, and strength of his omnipotent arme; and of his care to provide for thee for this life and the other, that thou canst acquiesce in what he promiseth to do for thee? In a word, if thou hast Christ, thou must not only love him, but for his sake, all thy new Kindred, which by thy marriage to him thou shalt be allied unto. How canst thou fadge to call the Saints thy brethren? canst thou love them heartily, and forget all the old grudges thou hast had against them? some of them thou wilt finde poor and persecuted, yet Christ is not ashamed to call them brethren, neither must thou. If thou findest thy heart now in such a disposition as suits these Interrogatories, I dare not deny the banes, yea, I dare not but pronounce Christ and thee Husband and Wife. Go, poor soul, (if I may call so glorious a Bride poor,) Go and comfort thy self with the expectation of thy Bridegrooms coming for thee, and when the evil day approaches, and death it self draws nigh, look not now with terrour upon it, but rather revive with old *Jacob*, to see the chariot which shall carry thee over unto the embraces of thy husband, whom thou heareſt to be in so great Honour and Ma-

jesty in heaven, as may assure thee he is able to make thee welcome when thou comest there. Amongst the *all things* which are ours by being Christs, the Apostle forgets not to name this to be one, *Death is ours*. And well he did so, or else we should never have look't upon it as a gift, but rather as a judgment. Now soul, thou art out of any danger of hurt that the evil day can do thee. Yet there remains something for thee to do, that thou mayest walk in the comfortable expectation of the evil day. We see that gracious persons may for want of a holy care fall into such distempers, as may put a sting into their thoughts of the evil day. *David*, that at one time would not fear *to walk in the valley of the shadow of death*, is so affrighted at another time when he is led towards it, that he cries, *Spare me, O Lord, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence*, Psal. 39. The childe, though he loves his father, may do that which may make him afraid to go home. Now, Christian, if thou wouldest live in a comfortable expectation of the evil day;

1. First, labour to die to this life, and the enjoyments of it every day more and more. Death is not so strong to him, whose natural strength has been wasted by long pining sickness, as it is to him that lies but a few dayes, and has strength of nature to make great resistance. Truly thus it is here; that Christian, whose love to this life and the contents of it, hath been for many years consuming and dying, will with more facility part with them, than he whose love is stronger to them. All Christians are not mortified in the same degree to the world. *Paul* tells us he died daily. He was ever sending more and more of his heart out of the world, so that by that time he came to dye, all his affections were pack't up and gone, which made him the more ready to follow, σπένδομαι, *I am ready to be offered up*, 2 Tim. 4. 6. If it be but a tooth to pull out, the faster it stands, the more pain we have to draw it. O loosen the roots of thy affections from the world, and the tree will fall more easily.

2. Secondly, be careful to approve thy self with diligence and faithfulness to God in thy place and calling. The clearer thou standest in thy own thoughts concerning the uprightness of thy heart in the tenure of thy Christian course, the more composure thou wilt have when the evil day comes. *I beseech thee*

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O Lord(saith good *Hezekiah* at the point of death as he thought) *remember now how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.* This cannot be our confidence, but it will be a better companion than a scoulding conscience; if the blood be bad, the spirits will be tainted also; the more our life has been corrupted with hypocrisie and unfaithfulnesse, the weaker our faith will be in a dying houre. There is great difference between two children that come home at night, one from the field, where he hath been diligent and faithful about his fathers work, and another that hath played the Truant a great part of the day; the former comes in confidently to stand before his father, the other sneaks to bed, and is afraid his father should see him, or ask where he hath been. O Sirs, look to your walking. These have been trying times as ever came to *England*. It has required more care and courage to keep sincerity than formerly. And that is the reason why it is so rare to finde Christians (especially those whose place and calling hath been more in the winde of temptation,) go off the stage at death with such a *Plaudite* of inward peace in their bosomes.

Thirdly, familiarize the thoughts of the evil day to thy soul; 3.
Handle this serpent, often walk daily in the serious meditations of it, do not run from them because they are unpleasing to flesh; that is the way to increase the terrour of it. Do with your souls, when shy of, and scared with the thoughts of affliction or death, as you use to do with your beast, that is given to bogle and start as you ride on him. When he flies back and starts at a thing, you do not yield to his fear and go back, that will make him worse another time, but you ride him up close to that which he is afraid of, and in time you break him of that quality. The evil day is not such a scareful thing to thee that art a Christian, as thou shouldest start for it. Bring up thy heart close to it. Shew thy soul what Christ hath done to take the sting out of it; what the sweet promises are, that are given on purpose to overcome the fear of it, and what thy hopes are thou shalt get by it. These will satisfie and compose thy spirit, whereas the shunning the thoughts of it will but increase thy fear, and bring thee more into bondage to it.

CHAP. VIII.

The second Argument with which the Exhortation is pressed, drawn from the assured victory which shall crown the souls conflict, if in this Armour, where several Points couched in the Argument, are briefly handled.

WE come now to the second Argument the Apostle useth, further to presse the exhortation; and that is taken from the glorious victory, which hovers over the heads of believers while in the fight, and shall surely crown them in the end; this is held forth in these words, *And having done all, to stand.* The phrase is short, but full.

SECT. 1.

1. First observe, Heaven is not won with good words and a fair Profession; *Having done all.* The doing Christian is the man that shall stand, when the empty boaster of his faith shall fall. The great talkers of Religion are oft the least doers. His Religion is in vain, whose Profession brings not letters testimonial from a holy life. Sacrifice without obedience is Sacriledge. Such rob God of that which he makes most account of. A great Captain once smote one of his souldiers for railing at his enemy, saying, that he called him not to raile on him, but to fight against him and kill him. 'Tis not crying out upon the Devil, and declaiming against sin in prayer or discourse, but fighting and mortifying it that God looks chiefly upon; such a one else doth but beat the aire; there are no marks to be seen on his flesh and unmortified lusts that he hath fought. *Paul* was in earnest, he left a witnesse upon his body, made black and blew with stroaks of mortification. It was not a little vapouring in sight of the Philistines that got *David* his wife, but shedding their blood:

blood: And is it so small a matter to be son to the King of Heaven, that thou thinkest to obtain it, without giving a real proof of thy zeal for God, and hatred to sin? *Not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work; this man* (saith the Apostle) *shall be blessed in his deed.* James 1. 25. Mark, not by his deed, but in his deed; he shall meet blessednesse in that way of obedience he walks in. The empty Professour disappoints others, who seeing his leaves, expect fruit, but find none; and at last he disappoints himself; he thinks to reach heaven, but shall misse of it. *Tertullian* speaks of some that think, *Satis Deum habere, si corde & animo suspiciatur, licèt actu minus fiat:* God hath enough (they think) if he be feared and reverenced in their hearts, though in their actions they shew it not so much: and therefore they can sin, and believe in God, and fear him never the worse: This (saith he) is to play the Adultéresse, and yet be chaste; to prepare poyson for ones father, and yet be dutiful; but let such know, (saith the same father) that if they can sin and believe, God will pardon them with a contradiction also; he'll forgive them, but they shall be turn'd into hell for all that. As ever you would stand at last, look you be found doing the work your Lord hath left you to make up, and trust not to lying words, as the Prophet speaks, *Jer.* 7.

SECT. 2.

Secondly, Observe, that such is the mercy of God in Christ to his children, that he accepts their weak endeavours, (joyn'd with sincerity and perseverance in his service) as if they were full obedience, and therefore they are here said to have *done all.* O who would not serve such a Lord! you heare servants sometimes complain of their Masters to be so rigid and strict, that they can never please them, no, not when they do their utmost: But this cannot be charged upon God. Be but so faithful as to do thy best, and God is so gracious that he will pardon thy worst. *David* knew this Gospel-indulgence, when he said, *Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect to all thy Commandments*, Psal. 119. 6. בְּהַבִּיטִי, when my eye is to all thy Commandments. The Traveller hath his eye on or towards the *Doct.* 2.

place he is going, though he be yet short of it; there he would be, and is putting on all he can to reach it; So stands the Saints heart to all the commands of God, he presseth on to come nearer and nearer to full obedience: such a soul shall never be put to shame. But wo to those that cover their sloth with the name of infirmity, yea, that spend their zeal and strength in the pursuit of the world or their lusts, and then think to make all up when charg'd therewith, That it is their infirmity, & they can serve God no better. These do by God as those two did by their Prince, (*Francis* the first of *France*) who cut off their right hand one for another, and then made it an excuse they were lame, and so could not serve in his Galleys, for which they were sent to the Gallowes. Thus many will be found at last to have disabled themselves, by refusing that help the Spirit hath offered to them, yea, wasted what they had given them, and so shall be rewarded for hypocrites as they are. God knows how to distinguish between the sincerity of a Saint in the midst of his infirmities, and the shifts of a false heart. But we will wave these, and briefly speak to foure points which lye clear in the words.

1. First, here is the necessity of perseverance. *Having done all.*
2. Secondly, here is the necessity of divine Armour, to persevere till we have done all. Wherefore else bids he them take this Armour for this end, if they could do it without?
3. Thirdly, here is the certainty of persevering and overcoming at last, if clad with this Armour; else it were small encouragement to bid them take that Armour which would not surely defend them.
4. Fourthly, here is the blessed result of the Saints perseverance, propounded as that which will abundantly recompence all their pain and patience in the war; having done all *to stand*. From these follow foure distinct points.

1. First, he that will be Christs souldier must persevere.
2. Secondly, there can be no perseverance without true grace in the heart.
3. Thirdly, where true grace is, that soul shall persevere.
4. Fourthly, to stand at the end of this war, will abundantly recompence all our hazard and hardship endured in the war.

SECT.

SECT. 3.

He that will be Christs souldier, must persevere to the end of his life in this war against Satan. This *Having done all*, comes in after our conflict with death: *That ye may be able to withstand in the evil day*; then follows, *And having done all.* We have not done all till that pitch't battel be fought. *The last enemy is death.* The word κατεργάζεσθαι, imports as much as to finish a businesse, and bring a matter to a full issue; so, *Phil.* 2. 12. where we translate it well, *Work out your salvation*: that is, perfect it; be not Christians by halves, but go through with it; the through Christian is the true Christian. Not he that takes the field, but he that keeps the field; not he that sets out, but he that holds out in this holy War, deserves the name of a Saint. There is not such a thing in this sense belonging to Christianity as an honourable retreat; not such a word of command in all Christs military Discipline, as Fall back and lay down your armes; No, you must fall on, and stand to your armes, till call'd off by death. *Doct.* 1.

First, we are under a Covenant and Oath to do this. Formerly souldiers used to take an oath not to flinch from their colours, but faithfully to cleave to their Leaders; this they called *Sacramentum militare*, a military oath. Such an oath lies upon every Christian. It is so essential to the being of a Saint, that they are described by this, *Psal.* 50. 5. *Gather my Saints together, those that have made a Covenant with me.* We are not Christians, till we have subscribed this Covenant, and that without any reservation. When we take upon us the Profession of Christs Name, we list our selves in his muster-roll, and by it do promise, that we will live and dye with him in opposition to all his enemies. *Every Nation will walk in the Name of his God, and we will walk in the Name of our God*; and what is it to walk in the Name of our God, but to fight under the banner of his Gospel, wherein his Name is displayed, by giving an eternal defiance to sin and Satan? If a Captain had not such a tye on his souldiers, he might have them to seek when the day of battel comes: therefore Christ tells us upon what termes he will 1.

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enroll us among his disciples: *If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his Crosse, and follow me.* He will not entertain us, till we resign up our selves freely to his dispose, that there may be no disputing with his commands afterwards, but as one under his authority, go and come at his word.

2. Secondly, perseverance is necessary, because our enemy perseveres to oppose us. There is no truce in the devils heart, no cessation of armes in our enemies camp. If an enemy continue to assault a City, and they within cease to resist, it is easie to tell what will follow: The Prophet that was sent to *Bethel* did his errand well, withstood *Jeroboams* temptation, but in his way home was drawn aside by the old Prophet, and at last slain by a Lion. Thus many flye from one temptation, but not persevering are vanquish't by another; those that at one time escape his sword, at another time are slain by it. *Joash* was hopeful when young, but it lasted not long. Yea, many precious servants of God, not making such vigorous resistance in their last dayes as in their first, have fallen foully, as we see in *Solomon*, *Asa*, and others. Indeed it is hard when a line is drawn to a great length, to keep it so streight that it slacken not; and to hold a thing long in our hand, and not to have a numbnesse grow in our fingers so as to remit of our strength; therefore we are bid so often to hold fast the Profession of our faith; but when we see an enemy gaping to catch us when we fall, me thinks this should quicken us the more to it.

3. Thirdly, because the promise of life and glory is setled upon the persevering soul, the crown stands at the Goal, he hath it that comes to the end of the race. *To him that overcomes will I give*, not in *prælio*, but in *bello*, not in a particular skirmish, but in the whole war. *Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the whole Will of God, ye might receive the promise*, Heb. 10. 36. There is a remarkable accent on that *henceforth*, which *Paul* mentions, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. *I have fought a good fight, henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of righteousnesse.* Why, was it not laid up before? yes, but having persevered and come near the Goale, being within sight of home, ready to dye, he takes now surer hold of the promise. Indeed in this sense it is, that a gracious soul is nearer its salvation after every victory than it was before,

Heaven

fore, becauſe he approacheth nearer to the end of his race, which is the time promiſed for the receiving of the promiſed ſalvation. Then and not till then the Garland drops upon his head. Rom. 13. 10.

Uſe Here we may take up a ſad lamentation, in reſpect of the many Apoſtate Profeſſours of our dayes. Never was this ſpiritual falling ſickneſſe more rife. O how many are ſick of it at preſent, and not a few fallen aſleep by it? Theſe times of war and confuſion have not made ſo many broken Merchants as broken Profeſſors; where is the Congregation that cannot ſhew ſome who have out-lived their Profeſſion? not unlike the ſilk-worm, which (they ſay) after all her ſpinning, works her ſelfe out of her bottome, and becomes at laſt a common flye. Are there not many, whoſe forwardneſſe in Religion we have ſtood gazing on with admiration, as the diſciples on the Temple, ready to ſay one to another, as they to Chriſt, See what manner of ſtones theſe are? what poliſhed gifts and ſhining graces are here? and now not one ſtone left upon another. O did you ever think, that they who went in ſo goodly array towards heaven in communion with you, would after that face about, and run over to the devils ſide, turn Blaſphemers, Worldlings and Atheiſts, as ſome have done? O what a ſad change is here! *It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteouſneſſe, than after they have known it, to turne from the holy Commandment delivered unto them*, 2 Pet. 2. 21. Better never to have walk't a ſtep towards heaven, than to put ſuch a ſcorn and reproach upon the wayes of God. *Comparationem videtur egiſſe qui utrumque cognoverit, & judicato pronunciaſſe eum meliorem cui ſe rurſus eſſe maluerit.* Tertul. de pœnit. Such a one who hath known both what a ſervice Satans is, and what Gods is, then to revolt from God to the devil, ſeems to have compared one with the other, and as the reſult of his mature thoughts, to pronounce the devils which he chooſeth better than Gods which he leaveth. And how is it poſſible that any can ſin upon a higher guilt, and go to hell under a greater load of wrath? Theſe are they which God loaths. He that hates putting away, diſdains much more to be himſelf thus put away. *If any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him*, Heb. 10. 38. The Apoſtate is ſaid to tread upon the Son of God, *Heb.* 10. 29. as if he were

no better than the dirt under his feet. Well, he ſhall have treading for treading, God himſelf will ſet his foot upon him, *Pſal.* 119. 118. *Thou haſt troden down all that erre from thy ſtatutes*, and who (think you) will be weary ſooneſt? he that is under foot beares the weight of the whole man upon him. To be under the foot of God, is to lye under the whole weight of Gods wrath. O pity and pray for ſuch forlorn ſouls, they are objects of the one, and ſubjects of the other; though they are fallen low, yet not into hell; now and then we ſee an *Eutychus* raiſed, that hath fallen from ſuch a height. *And you that ſtand, take heed leſt you fall.*

SECT. 4.

Doct. 2. Secondly, A ſoul void of divine armour cannot perſevere. What this divine armour is I have ſhewen, and the Apoſtle here doth in the ſeveral pieces of it. The ſanctifying graces of Gods Spirit are this Armour. One that hath not theſe wrought in him, will never hold out to paſſe all the ſtages of this Chriſtian race, to fight all the battels that are to be fought before victory is to be had. Common gifts of the Spirit, ſuch as illumination, conviction, ſudden pangs and fluſhing heats of affection may carry out the creature for a while with a goodly appearance of zeal for God, and forwardneſſe in Profeſſion; but the ſtrength theſe afford is ſoon ſpent. *Johns* hearers mentioned, *John* 5. 35. got ſome light and heat by ſitting under his burning Miniſtry, but how long did it laſt? *Ye were willing to rejoyce for a ſeaſon.* They were very beautiful colours that were drawn on them, but not laid in oyle, and therefore ſoon waſh't off again. The fooliſh Virgins made as great a blaze with their lamps, and did expect as good a day when Chriſt ſhould come, as the wiſe Virgins; but (alas!) their lamps are out before he appeared, and as good never a whit as never the better. The ſtony ground more forward than the beſt ſoile; the ſeed comes up immediately, as if a crop ſhould ſoon have been reap't, but a few nipping froſts turn its hue, and the day of harveſt proves a day of deſperate ſorrow. All theſe inſtances, and many more in Scripture do evince, that nothing ſhort of ſolid grace, and a principle of divine life in

in the soul will persevere. How forward soever Formalists and slighty Professours are, to promise themselves hopes of reaching heaven, they will finde it too long a step for their short-breathed souls to attain. The reasons are,

First, such want a principle of divine life to draw strength from Christ to persevere them in their course. That by which the gracious soul it self perseveres is the continual supply it receives from Christ; as the arme and foot is kept alive in the body by those vital spirits which they receive from the heart; *I live, (saith Paul) yet not I, but Christ in me*; that is, I live but at Christs cost; he holds as my soul, so my grace in life: Now the carnal person wanting this union, must needs waste and consume in time. He hath no root to stand on. A carcase when once it begins to rot, never recovers, but every day grows worse till it runs all into putrefaction; no salve or plaister will do it good: but where there is a principle of life, there when a member is wounded, nature sends supplyes of spirits, and helps to work with the salve for a cure. There is the same difference between a gracious person and an ungracious; see them opposed in this respect, *Prov.* 14. 17. *The righteous man falls seven times a day, and riseth; but the wicked falleth into mischief:* that is, in falling he falls further, and hath no power to recover himselfe. When *Cain* sinned, see how he falls further and further like a stone down a hill, never stayes till he comes to the bottome of despair; from envying his brother to malice, from malice to murder, from murder to impudent lying, and brazen-fac't boldnesse to God himself, and from that to despair; so true is that, 2 *Tim.* 3. 13. *Evil men shall waxe worse and worse.* But now when a Saint falls, he riseth, because when he falls he hath a principle of life to cry out to Christ, and such an interest in Christ as stirs him up to help; *Lord, save me*, said *Peter*, (when he began to sink) and presently Christs hand is put forth, he chides him for his unbelief, but he helps him. 1.

Secondly, an unregenerate soul hath no assurance for the continuance of those common gifts of the Spirit he hath at present; they come on the same termes that temporal enjoyments do to such a one. A carnal person, when he hath his table most sumptuously spread, cannot shew any word of promise under Gods hand that he shall be provided for the next meal. God 2.

gives theſe things to the wicked, as we a cruſt or nights lodging to a beggar in our Barn; 'tis our bounty, ſuch a one could not ſue us for denying the ſame: ſo in the common gifts of the Spirit, God was not bound to give them, nor is he to continue them. Thou haſt ſome knowledge of the things of God, thou mayeſt for all this dye without knowledge at laſt; thou art a ſinner in chaines, reſtraining grace keeps thee in; this may be taken off, and thou let looſe to thy luſts as freely as ever. And how can he perſevere, that in one day may from praying, fall to curſing; from a whining complaining conſcience, come to have a ſeared conſcience.

3. Thirdly, every unregenerate man, when moſt buſie with Profeſſion, hath thoſe engagements lie upon him, that will neceſſarily, when put to it, take him off one time or other. One is engaged to the world; and when he can come to a good market for that, than he goes away, he cannot have both, and now he'll make it appear which he loved beſt. *Demas hath forſaken us, and embraced this preſent world.* Another is a ſlave to his luſt, and when this calls him he muſt go in ſpight of Profeſſion, conſcience, God and all. *Herod* feared *John*, and did many things; but love is ſtronger than fear; his love to *Herodias* overcomes his fear of *John*, and makes him cut off at once the head of *John*, and the hopeful buildings which appeared in the tenderneſs of his conſcience, and begun Reformation. One root of bitterneſſe or other, will ſpring up in ſuch a one. If the complexion of the ſoul be profane, it will at laſt come to it, however for a while there may ſome religious colour appear in the mans face, from ſome other external cauſe.

Uſe This ſhews us what is the root of all final Apoſtaſie, and that is the want of a through change of the heart. The Apoſtate doth not loſe the grace he had, but diſcovers he never had any; and 'tis no wonder to hear that he proves bankrupt, that was worſe than nought when he firſt ſet up. Many take up their Saintſhip upon truſt, and trade in the duties of Religion with the credit they have gain'd from others opinion of them. They believe themſelves to be Chriſtians, becauſe others hope them to be ſuch, and ſo their great buſineſſe is by a zeal in thoſe exerciſes of Religion that lie outmoſt, to keep up the credit which they have abroad, but do not look to get a ſtock of ſolid grace within, which

which should maintain them in their Profession, and this proves their undoing at last. Let it therefore make us in the fear of God, to consider upon what score we take up our Profession. Is there that within which bears proportion to our outward zeal? Have we laid a good bottome? Is not the superstructive top heavy-jetting too far beyond the weak foundation? They say Trees shoot as much in the root under ground, as in the branches above, and so doth true grace. O remember what was the perishing of the seed in the stony ground; it lacked root, and why so? but because it was stony. Be willing the plough should go deep enough to humble thee for sin, and rend thy heart from sinne. The soul effectually brought out of the love of sin as sin, will never be through friends with it again. In a word, be serious to finde out the great spring that sets all thy wheels on motion in thy religious trade. Do as men that would know how much they are worth, who set what they owe on one side, and what stock they have on the other; and then when they have laid out enough to discharge all debts and engagements, what remaines to themselves they may call their own: Thus do thou consider what thou standest engaged to, thy worldly credit, profit, slavish fear of God, and selfish desire of happinesse, and when thou hast allowed for all these, see then what remains of thy fear of God, love to God, &c. If nothing, thou art nought; if any, the lesse there be, the weaker Christian thou art, and when thou comest to be tried in Gods fire, thou wilt suffer losse of all the other, which as hay and stubble will be burnt up.

SECT. 5.

Every soul clad with this Armour of God shall stand and perseverе: Or thus, True grace can never be vanquish't. The Christian is born a Conquerour, the gates of hell shall not prevail against him. *He that is borne of God overcometh the world*, 1 John 5. 4. Mark, from whence the victory is dated, even from his birth. There is victory sowen in his new nature, even that seed of God, which will keep him from being swallowed up by sin or Satan. As Christ rose never to die more; so doth he raise souls. *Doct.* 3.

ſouls from the grave of ſin, never to come under the power of ſpiritual death more. *Theſe holy ones of God cannot ſee corruption.* Hence he that believes is ſaid in the preſent tenſe to have eternal life. As the Law that came four hundred years after, could not make void the promiſe made to *Abraham*, ſo nothing that intervents can hinder the accompliſhing of that promiſe of eternal life, which was given, and paſſed to Chriſt in their behalf before the foundation of the world. If a Saint could any way miſcarry- and fall ſhort of this eternal life, it muſt be from one of theſe three cauſes. 1. Becauſe God may forſake the Chriſtian, and withdraw his grace and help from him; Or, 2. Becauſe the believer may forſake God; Or laſtly, becauſe Satan may pluck him out of the hands of God. A fourth I know not. Now none of theſe can be.

1. Firſt, God can never forſake the Chriſtian. Some unadviſed ſpeeches have drop't from tempted ſouls, diſcovering ſome fears of Gods caſting them off; but they have been confuted, and have eaten their words with ſhame, as we ſee in *Job* and *David*. O what admirable ſecurity hath the great God given his children in this particular!

Heb. 13. 5. Firſt, *in Promiſes*. *He hath ſaid, I will never leave thee nor forſake thee.* Five negatives in that promiſe, as ſo many ſeals to ratifie it to our faith; he aſſures us there never did or can ſo much as ariſe a repenting thought in his heart concerning the purpoſes of his love and ſpecial grace towards his children, *Rom.* 11. 29. *The gifts and calling of God are without repentance*, even the believers ſin againſt him, their froward carriage ſtirs not up thoughts of caſting them off, but of reducing them; *For the iniquity of this covetouſneſſe I was wroth and ſmote him; I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart; I have ſeen his wayes and will heal them*, Iſa. 57. 17, 18. The water of the Saints failings, caſt on the fire of Gods love, cannot quench it; Whom he loves he loves to the end.

Secondly, God to give further weight and credit to our unbelieving and miſgiving hearts, ſeals his promiſe with an oath. See *Iſa.* 54. 9, 10. *With everlaſting kindneſſe will I have mercy on thee, ſaith the Lord thy Redeemer; this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have ſworn that the waters of Noah ſhould not return over the earth, ſo have I ſworn that I will not be wroth with thee.*

thee. Yea, he goes on and tells them, *The mountaines ſhall depart*, (meaning at the end of the world, when the whole frame of the heavens and earth ſhall be diſſolv'd) *but his kindneſſe ſhall not depart, neither ſhall his Covenant of peace be removed.* Now leſt any ſhould think this was ſome Charter belonging to the Jews alone, we find it, *v.* 17. ſetled on every ſervant of God as his portion: *This is the heritage of the ſervants of the Lord, and their righteouſneſſe is of me, ſaith the Lord.* And ſurely God that is ſo careful to make his childrens inheritance ſure to them, will con them little thanks, who buſie their wits to invalid and weaken his conveyances, yea, diſprove his will; if they had taken a bribe, they could not plead Satans cauſe better.

Thirdly, in the actual fulfilling theſe promiſes, (which he hath made to beleevers) to Chriſt their Attourney. As God before the world began, gave a promiſe of eternal life to Chriſt for them, ſo now hath he given actual poſſeſſion of that glorious place to Chriſt (as their Advocate and Attourney) where that eternal life ſhall be enjoyed by them; for as he came upon our errand from heaven, ſo thither he returned again to take and hold poſſeſſion of that inheritance, which God had of old promiſed, and he in one ſumme at his death had paid for. And now what ground of fear can there be in the believers heart, concerning Gods love ſtanding firm to him; when he ſees the whole Covenant performed already to Chriſt for him, whom God hath not only called to, ſanctified for, and upheld in the great work he was to finiſh for us, but alſo juſtified in his reſurrection and Jayle-delivery, and received him into heaven, there to ſit on the right hand of the Majeſty on High, by which he hath not only poſſeſſion for us, but full power to give it unto all believers?

A ſecond occaſion of fear to the believer that he ſhall not perſevere, may be taken from himſelf. He has many ſad fears and tremblings of heart, that he ſhall at laſt forſake God: The journey is long to heaven, and his grace weak; O, ſaith he, is it not poſſible that this little grace ſhould fail, and I fall ſhort at laſt of glory? Now here there is ſuch proviſion made in the Covenant, as ſcatters this cloud alſo.

Firſt, the Spirit of God is given on purpoſe to prevent this; Chriſt left his mother with *John*, but his Saints with his Spirit, to tutour and keep them that they ſhould not loſe themſelves in their

their journey to heaven. O how ſweet is that place, *Ezek.*36.27. *I will put my Spirit in you, and cauſe you to walk in my ſtatutes, and ye ſhall keep my judgements and do them.* He doth not ſay they ſhall have his Spirit, if they will walk in his ſtatutes: no, his Spirit ſhall cauſe them to do it. But may be thou art afraid thou mayeſt grieve him, and ſo he in anger leave thee, and thou periſh for want of his help and counſel. *Anſw.* The Spirit of God is indeed ſenſible of unkindneſſe, and upon a Saints ſinne, may withdraw in regard of preſent aſſiſtance, but never in regard of his care; as a mother may let her froward childe go alone, till it get a knock, that may make it cry to be taken up again into her armes, but ſtill her eye is on it that it ſhall not fall into miſchief. The Spirit withdrew from *Samſon*, and he fell into the Philiſtines hands, and this makes him cry to God, and the Spirit puts forth his ſtrength in him again. Thus here, indeed the office of the Spirit is to abide for ever with the Saints, *John* 14. 16. He ſhall ſend you another Comforter, that he may abide for ever with you.

Secondly, It is one maine buſineſſe of Chriſts interceſſion, to obtain of God perſeverance for our weak graces. *I have prayed* (ſaith Chriſt to *Peter*) *that thy faith faile not.* But was not that a particular priviledge granted to him, which may be denyed to another? O Sirs, do we think that Chriſts love looks a ſquint? doth he pray for one childe more than another? ſuch feares and jealouſies fooliſh children are ready to take up, and therefore Chriſt prevents them, by bidding *Peter* in the very next words, *When thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren*, Luke 22. 31, that is, when thou feeleſt the efficacy and force of my prayer for thy faith, carry this good news to them, that their hearts may be ſtrengthened alſo; And what ſtrengthening had it been to them, if Chriſt prayed not for them as well as for *Peter*? does Chriſt pray for us? yea, doth he not live to pray for us? O how can children of ſo many prayers, of ſuch prayers periſh? The Saints prayers have a mighty power. *Jacob* wreſtled and had power with God, this was his ſword and bowe (to allude to what he ſaid of the parcel of ground he took, from the Amorite,) by which he got the victory and had power with God. This was the Key with which *Elijah* opened and ſhut heaven. And if the weak prayers of Saints (coming in his Name)

Name) have ſuch credit in heaven, that with them they can go to Gods treaſure, and carry away as much as their armes of faith can hold; O then, what prevalency has Chriſts interceſſion, who is a Son, an obedient Son, that is come from finiſhing his great work on earth, and now prayes his Father for nothing but what he hath bid him ask, yea, for nothing but what he is beforehand with him for, and all this to a Father that loves thoſe he prays for as well as himſelf? Bid Satan avaunt. Say not thy weak faith ſhall periſh, till thou heareſt that Chriſt hath left praying, or meets with a repulſe.

Thirdly, let us ſee whether Satan be able to pluck the Chriſtian away, and ſtep betwixt him and home. I have had occaſion to ſpeak of this ſubject in another place, the leſſe here ſhall ſerve. Abundant proviſion is made againſt his aſſaults. The Saint is wrap't up in the everlaſting armes of Almighty Power; and what can a curſed Devil do againſt God, who laid thoſe chaines on him which he cannot ſhake off? when he is able to pluck that dart of divine fury out of his own conſcience which God hath faſtened there, then let him think of ſuch an enterpriſe as this. How can he overcome thee that cannot tempt thee but in Gods appointed time? And if God ſet Satan his time to aſſault the Chriſtian whom he loves ſo dearly, ſurely it ſhall be when he ſhall be repulſed with greateſt ſhame. 3.

Away then with that doctrine, which ſaith, One may be a Saint to day, and none to morrow; now a *Peter*, anon a *Judas*; O what unſavoury ſtuffe is this! a principle it is that at once croſſeth the main deſign of God in the Goſpel-Covenant, reflects ſadly on the honour of Chriſt, and wounds the Saints comfort to the heart. *Uſe* 1.

Firſt, It is derogatory to Gods deſign in the Goſpel-Covenant, which we find plainly to be this, that his children might be put into a ſtate ſure and ſafe from miſcarrying at laſt, which by the firſt Covenant man was not. See *Rom.* 4. 16. *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be of grace; to the end the promiſe might be ſure to all the ſeed.* God on purpoſe becauſe of the weakneſſe of the firſt Covenant through the mutable nature of man, makes a new Covenant of a far different conſtitution and frame, not of works as that was, but of faith; and why? the Apoſtle tells us, that it might be ſure *to all the ſeed*, that not 1.

one ſoul, who by faith ſhould be adopted into *Abrahams* family, and ſo become a child of the promiſe, ſhould fail of inheriting the bleſſing of the promiſe, which is eternal life; called ſo, *Tit.* 1. 2. and all this becauſe the promiſe is founded upon grace, that is, Gods immutable good pleaſure in Chriſt, and not upon the variable and inconſtant obedience of man as the firſt Covenant was. But if a Saint may finally fall, then is the promiſe no more ſure in this Covenant than it was in that, and ſo God ſhould not have his end he propounds.

2. Secondly, it reflects ſadly on Chriſts honour, both as he is intruſted with the Saints ſalvation, and alſo as he is intereſſed in it. *Firſt*, as he is intruſted with the Saints ſalvation. He tells us they are given him of his Father for this very end, that he ſhould give them eternal life; yea, that power which he hath over all fleſh, was given him to render him every way able to effect this one buſineſſe, *John* 17. 2. He accepts the charge, ownes them as his ſheep, knows them every one, and promiſeth, *he will give them eternal life; they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of his hand*, John 10. 27, 28. Now how well do they conſult with Chriſts honour, that ſay his ſheep may dye in a ditch of final Apoſtaſie notwithſtanding all this? *Secondly*, as he is intereſſed in the ſalvation of every Saint. The life of his own glory is bound up in the eternal life of his Saints. It's true, when *Adam* fell, God did ſave his ſtake; but how can Chriſt who is ſo nearly united to every believing ſoul? There was a league of friendſhip betwixt God and *Adam*; but no ſuch union as here, where Chriſt and his Saints make but one Chriſt, for which his Church is called *Chriſt*, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. *As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body, ſo is Chriſt.* Chriſt and his members make one Chriſt: now is it poſſible a piece of Chriſt can be found at laſt burning in hell? can Chriſt be a Cripple Chriſt? can this member drop off and that? 'Tis as poſſible that all, as any ſhould; and how can Chriſt part with his myſtical members and not with his glory? doth not every member adde an ornament to the body, yea, an honour? The Church is called *the fulneſſe of him*, *Eph.* 1. 23. O how diſhonourable is it to Chriſt that we ſhould think he ſhall want any of his fulneſſe? and how can the man be full and compleat that wants a member?

Thirdly,

Thirdly, it wounds the Saints comfort to the heart, and layes their joy a bleeding. *Paul* ſaith, he did not καπηλεύειν τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ, He did not daſh the generous wine of Gods Word with the water of mans conceits; No, he gave them pure Goſpel. Truly, this principle of Saints falling from grace gives a ſad daſh to the ſweet wine of the Promiſes; the ſoul-reviving comfort that ſparkles in them, ariſeth from the ſure conveyance with which they are in Chriſt made over to believers to have and to hold for ever. Hence called *the ſure mercyes of David*, Acts 13. 34. mercies that ſhall never faile: This, this indeed is wine that makes glad the heart of a Saint; though he may be whipt in the houſe when he ſins, yet he ſhall not be turned out of doores. As God promiſed in the type to *Davids* ſeed, *Pſal.* 89. 33. *Nevertheleſſe, my loving kindneſſe will I not utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to faile*; and, v. 36. *His ſeed ſhall endure for ever.* Could any thing ſeparate the believer from the love of God in Chriſt, this would be as a hole at the bottome of his cup to leak out all his joy; he might then feare every temptation or affliction he meets would ſlay him, and ſo the wickeds curſe would be the Saints portion. His life would ever hang in doubt before him; and the fearful expectation of his final miſcarriage, which he ſees may befal him, would eat up the joy of his preſent hope. Now how contrary ſuch a frame of heart is to the ſpirit of adoption, and full aſſurance of hope, which the grace of the new Covenant gives, he that runs may reade in the Word. 2 Cor. 2. 17.

Uſe 2. This truth prepares a ſoveraign cordial to reſtore the fainting ſpirits of weak believers, who are ſurpriſed with many feares, concerning their perſevering and holding out to the end of their warfare. Be of good cheer, poor ſoul; God hath given Chriſt the life of every ſoul within the Ark of his Covenant. Your eternal ſafety is provided for; *Whom he loves he loves to the end*, Joh. 13. 1. Hath he made thee willing in the day of his power to march under his banner, and eſpouſe his quarrel againſt ſin and hell? the ſame power that overcame thy rebellious heart to himſelfe, will overcome all thy enemyes within and without for thee; ſay not thou art a bruiſed reed; with this he will break Satans head, and not ceaſe till he hath brought forth judgement into compleat victory in thy ſoul. He that can make a few wound-

ed men rise up and take a strong City, can make a wounded spirit
Jer. 37. 10. triumph over sin and devils. The Ark stood in the midst of *Jordan*, till the whole Camp of *Israel* was safely got over into *Canaan*, *Josh.* 3. And so doth the Covenant (which the Ark did but typifie;) yea, Christ, Covenant and all stand to secure the Saints a safe passage to Heaven. If but one believer drowns, the Covenant must drown with him. Christ and the Saints are put together as co-heires of the same inheritance, *Rom.* 8. 17. *If children, then heirs, heires of God, and joynt-heirs with Christ.* We cannot dispute against one, but we question the firmnesse of the others title. When you hear Christ is turn'd out of heaven, or himself to be willing to sell his inheritance there, then, poor Christian, fear thy coming thither, and not till then. Co-heirs cannot sell the inheritance except both give up their right, which Christ will never do nor suffer thee.

Use 3. Thirdly, this truth calls for a word or two of caution. Though there is no fear of a Saints falling from grace, yet there is great danger of others falling from the top of this comfortable doctrine into a careless security, and presumptuous boldnesse; and therefore a battlement is very necessary, that from it we may with safety to our souls, stand and view the pleasant prospect this truth presents to our eye. That flower from which the Bee sucks honey, the spider draws poyson. That which is a restorative to the Saints grace, proves an incentive to the lust of a wicked man. What *Paul* said of the Law, we may truly of the Gospel: Sin taking occasion from the grace of the Gospel, and the sweet promises thereof, deceives the carnal heart, and works in him all manner of wickednesse. Indeed sin seldome grows so rank anywhere, as in those who water its roots with the grace of the Gospel. Two wayes this doctrine may be abused.

First, into a neglect of duty.

Secondly, into a liberty to sin. Take heed of both.

1. First, beware of falling into a neglect of duty upon this score; If a Christian, thou canst not fall away from grace. Take for an antidote against this three particulars.

First, there are other Arguments to invite; yea, that will constrain thee to a constant vigorous performing of duty, though the fear of falling away should not come in, or else thou art

not

not a Christian; what? nothing make the child diligent about his fathers businesse, but fear of being disinherited and turned out of doors? There is sure some better motive to duty in a Saints heart, or else Religion is a melancholy work. Speak for your selves, O ye Saints; is self-preservation all you pray for, and hear for? should a messenger come from Heaven, and tell you Heaven were yours, would this make you give over your spiritual trade, and not care whether you had any more acquaintance with God till you came thither? O how harsh doth this sound in your eares! There are such principles engraven in the Christians bosome, that will not suffer a strangenesse long to grow betwixt God and him. He is under the Law of a new life, which carries him naturally to desire communion with God, as the child doth to see the face of his deare father; and every duty is a Mount wherein God presents himself to be seen and enjoyed by the Christian.

Secondly, to neglect duty upon such a perswasion, is contrary to Christs practice and counsel. *First*, his practice. Though Christ never doubted of his Fathers love, nor questioned the happy issue of all his temptations, agonies and sufferings; yet he prayes, and prayes again more earnestly, *Luke* 22. 44. *Secondly*, his counsel and command. He told *Peter*, that Satan had begg'd leave to have him to sift him. But withal he comforts him (who was to be hardest put to it) with this, *But I have prayed for thee that thy faith faile not.* Sure our Saviour by this provision made for him and the rest, means to save them a labour that they need not watch or pray. No such matter: after this, as you may see, *ver.* 40. He calls them up to duty, *Pray that ye enter not into temptation.* Christs praying for them was to strengthen their faith, when they should themselves pray for the same mercy; not to nourish their sloth that they needed not to pray. Christs prayers in Heaven for his Saints are all heard already: but the return of them is reserved to be enclosed in the answer God sends to their own prayers. The Christian cannot in faith expect to receive the mercies Christ prayes for in Heaven, so long as he lives in the neglect of his duty on earth. They stand ready against he shall call for them by the prayer of faith, and if they be not worth sending this messenger to Heaven, truly they are worth little. 2.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, conſider, that although the Chriſtian be ſecured from a total and final apoſtaſy, yet he may fall ſadly to the bruiſing of his conſcience, enfeebling his grace, and reproach of the Goſpel, which ſure are enough to keep the Chriſtian upon his watch; and the more, becauſe ordinarily the Saints back-ſlidings begin in their duties. As it is with tradeſmen in the world, they firſt grow careleſſe of their buſineſſe, often out of their ſhop, and then they go behinde-hand in their eſtates: So here, firſt remiſſe in a duty, and then fall into a decay of their graces and comforts, yea, ſometimes into wayes that are ſcandalous. A ſtuffe loſeth its gloſſe before it weares: the Chriſtian, the luſtre of his grace in the lively exerciſe of duty, and then the ſtrength of it.

Secondly, take heed of abuſing this doctrine unto a liberty to ſin; ſhall we ſin becauſe grace abounds? grow looſe, becauſe we have God faſt bound in his promiſe? God forbid; none but a Devil would teach us this Logick; It was a great height of ſin thoſe wretched Jewes came to, who could quaffe and carouſe it while death look't in upon them at the windows; *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall dye.* They diſcovered their Atheiſme therein. But what a prodigious ſtature in ſin muſt that man be grown to, that can ſin under the protection of the promiſe, and draw his encouragement to ſin from the everlaſting love of God? Let us eat and drink, for we are ſure to live and be ſaved. Grace cannot dwell in that heart which draws ſuch a curſed concluſion from the premiſſes of Gods grace. The Saints have not ſo learn't Chriſt. The inference the Apoſtle makes from the ſweet priviledges we enjoy in the Covenant of grace, is not to wallow in ſin; but having theſe promiſes, to cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſſe of fleſh and ſpirit, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. 'Tis the nature of faith, (the grace that trades with promiſes) to purifie the heart. Now the more certain report faith brings of Gods love from the promiſe to the ſoul, the more it purifies the heart, becauſe love by which faith works, is thereby more inflamed to God; and if once this affection takes fire, the room becomes too hot for ſin to ſtay there.

SECT.

SECT. 6.

The fourth note and laſt is, That it will abundantly recompence all the hardſhip and trouble the Chriſtian endures in this war againſt ſin and Satan, that he ſhall be able when the war is ended to ſtand. In mans wars all do not get by them that fight in them; the gains of theſe are commonly put into a few pockets. The common ſouldiers endure moſt of the hardſhip, but go away with little of the profit; they fight to make a few that are great yet greater, and are many times themſelves turn'd off at laſt, with what will hardly pay for the cure of their wounds, or keep them from ſtarving in a poor Hoſpital. But in this war there is none loſeth, but he that runs away. A glorious reward there is for every faithful ſouldier in Chriſts Camp, and that is wrapt up in this phraſe, *Having done all to ſtand.* Now in this place, *to ſtand* imports three things, which laid together will clear the point.

Firſt, *to ſtand*, in this place, is to ſtand Conquerours. An Army when conquered, is ſaid to fall before their enemy, and the Conquerour to ſtand. Every Chriſtian ſhall at the end of the war ſtand a Conquerour over his vanquiſh't luſts, and Satan that headed them. Many a ſweet victory the Chriſtian hath here over Satan; But (alas!) the joy of theſe Conqueſts is again interrupted with freſh alarms from his rallied enemy. One day he hath the better, and may be the next he is put to the hazard of another battel; much ado he hath to keep what he hath got: yea, his very victories are ſuch as ſend him bleeding out of the field: Though he repulſes the temptation at laſt, yet the wounds his conſcience gets in the fight, do overcaſt the glory of the victory. 'Tis ſeldome the Chriſtian comes off without ſome ſad complaint of the treachery of his own heart, which had like to have loſt the day, and betrayed him into his enemyes hand: But for thy eternal comfort, Know (poor Chriſtian) there is a bleſſed day coming, which ſhall make a full and final deciſion of the quarrel betwixt thee and Satan; Thou ſhalt ſee this enemyes Camp quite broke up, not a weapon left in his hand to lift up againſt thee. Thou ſhalt tread upon his high places, from which he hath made ſo many ſhots at thee. Thou ſhalt ſee them all diſmantled

Lev. 26. Dan. 11. 25.

mantled and demolished, till there be not left standing any one corruption in thy bosome, for a devil to hide and harbour himself in. Satan, at whose approach thou hast so trembled, shall then be subdued under thy feet: he that hath so oft bid thee bow down, that he might go over thy soul and trample upon all thy glory, shall now have his neck laid to be troden on by thee. Were there nothing else to be expected as the fruits of our watching and praying, weeping and mourning, severe duties of mortification and self-denial, with whatever else our Christian warfare puts us upon but this, our labour sure would not be in vain in the Lord. Yea, blessed watching and praying, happy tears and wounds we meet with in this war; may they but at last end in a full and eternal victory over sin and Satan. Bondage is one of the worst of evils. The baser an enemy is, the more abhorred by noble spirits. *Saul* feared to fall into the hands of the uncircumcised Philistines, and to be abused by their scornes and reproaches more then a bloody death. Who baser than Satan? what viler tyrant than sin? Glorious then will the day be, wherein we shall praise God for delivering us out of the hands of all our sins, and from the hand of Satan. But dismal to you (sinners) who at the same time wherein you shall see the Saints stand with crowns of victory on their heads, must like fettered captives be dragg'd to hells dungeon, there to have your eare bored unto an eternal bondage under your lusts. And what more miserable sentence can God himself passe upon you? Here sin is pleasure, there it will be your torment. Here a sweet bit and goes down glib, but there it will stick in your throats. Here you have suitable provision to entertain your lusts withal: Palaces for pride to dwell and strut her self in. Delicious fare for your wanton palates: houses, and lands, with coffers of silver and gold for your covetous hearts, by their self-pleasing thoughts to sit brooding upon: but you will finde none of these there; hell is a barren place, nothing grows in that land of darkness to solace and recreate the sinners minds. You shall have your lusts, but want the food you long for. O what a torment must that needs be, to have a soul sharp set, even to a ravenous hunger after sin; but chain'd up where it can come at nothing it would have to satisfie its lust: for a proud wretch, that could wish he might domineer over all the world, yea, over God himself if he would let him, to be kept down in such a dungeon

as

as hell is, O how it will cut! for the malicious ſinner, whoſe heart ſwells with rancour againſt God and his Saints, that he could pluck them out of Gods boſome, yea, God out of his throne if he had power, to finde his hands ſo manacled, that he can do nothing againſt them he ſo hates: O how this will torment! Speak, O you Saints, whoſe partial victory over ſin at preſent is ſo ſweet to you, that you would chooſe a thouſand deaths, ſooner than return to your old bondage under your luſts: how glorious then is that day in your eye, when this ſhall be compleated in a full and eternal Conqueſt, never to have any thing to do more with ſin or Satan!

2. Secondly, *to ſtand*, is here to ſtand juſtified and acquitted at the great day of judgement. The phraſe is frequent in Scripture, which ſets out the ſolemn diſcharge they ſhall have then, by ſtanding in judgement. *Pſal.* 1. 5. *The wicked ſhall not ſtand in the judgement*; that is, they ſhall not be juſtified. *Pſal.* 130. 3. *If thou, Lord, ſhouldeſt mark iniquity, O Lord, who ſhall ſtand?* that is, who ſhall be diſcharged? The great God, upon whoſe errand we come into the world, hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world by Jeſus Chriſt; a ſolemn day it will be, when all that ever lived on earth, high and low, good and bad, ſhall meet in one Aſſembly to make their perſonal appearance before Chriſt, and from his mouth to receive their eternal doom, who ſhall in his Majeſtick robes of glory aſcend the awful ſeat of Judicature, attended with his illuſtrious traine and guard of Angels about him, as ſo many officers ready to execute and perform his pleaſure according to the definitive ſentence that he ſhall pronounce; either to conduct thoſe bleſſed ones whom he ſhall juſtifie into his glorious Kingdome, or binde them hand and foot to be caſt into hells unquenchable flames whom he ſhall condemn. I do not wonder that *Pauls* Sermon on this ſubject, did make an earth-quake in *Felix* his conſcience: but rather that any ſhould be ſo far gone in a lethargy, and dedolent numbneſſe of conſcience, as the thought of this day cannot recover them to their ſenſe and feeling. O Sirs, do you not vote them happy men and women that ſhall ſpeed well on this day? are not your thoughts enquiring who thoſe bleſſed ſouls are, which ſhall be acquitted by the lively voyce of Chriſt the Judge? You need not aſcend to ſearch the rolls of election in heaven; here you may

know they are ſuch as fight the Lords battels on earth againſt Satan, in the Lords Armour, and that to the end of their lives. Theſe having done all ſhall ſtand in judgement. And were it but at a mans bar, ſome Court-Martial, where a ſouldier ſtood upon trial for his life, either to be condemned as a Traitour to his Prince, or clear'd as faithful in his truſt; O how ſuch a one would liſten to heare how it would go with him, and be over-joyed when the Judge pronounces him innocent! Well may ſuch be bid to fall down on their knees, thank God and the Judge that have ſaved their lives; how much more raviſhing will the ſweet voyce of Chriſt be in the Saints eares, when he ſhall in the face of men and Angels make publick declaration of their righteouſneſſe! O how confounded will Satan then be, who was their accuſer to God and their own conſciences alſo, ever threatening them with the terrour of that day! how blank will the wicked world be, to ſee the dirt that they had thrown by their calumnies and lying reports on the Saints faces, wiped off with Chriſts own hand; they from Chriſts mouth to be juſtified as ſincere, whom they had call'd hypocrites! will not this, O ye Saints, be enough for all the ſcorne you were laden with from the world, and conflict you endured with the Prince of the world? But this is not all. Therefore

3. Thirdly, to ſtand, doth here alſo (as the complement of their reward) denote the Saints ſtanding in heavens glory. Princes when they would reward any of their ſubjects, that in their wars have done eminent ſervice to the crown, (as the utmoſt they can do for them) do prefer them to Court, there to enjoy their Princely favour, and ſtand in ſome place of honourable ſervice before them continually. *Solomon* ſets it out as the greateſt reward of faithful ſubjects *to ſtand before Kings.* Heaven is the royal City where the great God keeps his Court. The happineſſe of glorious Angels is to ſtand there before God. *I am Gabriel that ſtand in the preſence of God*, Luke 1. 19. That is, I am one of thoſe heavenly ſpirits who wait on the great God, and ſtand before his face, as Courtiers do about their Prince. Now ſuch honour ſhall every faithful ſoul have. *Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, If thou wilt walk in my wayes, and if thou wilt keep my charge, I will give thee places to walk among theſe that ſtand by*, Zech. 3. 7. He alludes to the Temple, which had rooms joyning

ing to it for the Priests that waited on the Lord in his holy service there. Or to Courtiers, that have stately galleryes and lodgings becoming their place at Court allowed them in the Kings Palace they wait upon. Thus all the Saints, (whose representative *Joshua* was) shall after they have kept the Lords charge in a short lifes service on earth, be called up to stand before God in heaven, where with Angels they shall have their galleries and mansions of glory also. O happy they who shall stand before the Lord in glory! The greatest Peeres of a Realme (such as Earles, Marquesses and Dukes are) count it greater honour to stand before their King, though bare-headed and oft upon the knee, than to live in the Countrey, where all bow and stand bare to them; yea, let but their Prince forbid them coming to Court, and 'tis not their great estates or respect they have where they live will content them. 'Tis better to wait in heaven than to raign on earth. 'Tis sweet standing before the Lord here in an Ordinance; one day in the worship of God is better than many elsewhere; O what then is it to stand before God in glory! If the Saints spikenard sendeth forth so sweet a smell, while the King sits at his Table here in a Sermon or Sacrament: O then Cant. 1. 12. what joy must needs flow from their near attendance on him, as he sits at his table in heaven, which when God first made, it was intended by him to be that Chamber of presence, in which he would present himself to be seen of, and enjoyed by his Saints in all his glory! I know nothing would have a more powerful, yea, universal operation upon a Saints spirit, than the frequent and spiritual considerarion of that blissful state in heaven, which shall at last crown all their sad conflicts here on earth. None like this sword to cut the very sinews of temptation, and behead those lusts, which defie and out-brave whole troops of other Arguments. It is almost impossible to sin with lively thoughts and hopes of that glory. 'Tis when the thoughts of heaven are long out of the Christians sight, and he knows not what is become of his hopes to that glorious place, that he begins to set up some idol, (as *Israel* the Calfe in *Moses* his absence) which he may dance before. But let heaven come in sight, and the Christians heart will be well-warm'd with the thoughts of it, and you may as soon perswade a King to throw his royal Diademe into a sink, and wallow with his robes in a kennel, as a Saint to sin with

the expectation of heavens glory. Sin is a devils work, not a Saints, who is a Peer of heaven, and waits every houre for the Writ that ſhall call him to ſtand with Angels and glorified Saints before the throne of God. This would cheer the Chriſtians heart, and confirme him when the fight is hotteſt, and the bullets flye thickeſt from men and devils, to think, 'tis heaven all this is for, where it's worth having a place, though we go through fire and water to it. *'Tis before the Lord*, (ſaid *David* to ſcoffing (*Michal*) *that choſe me, before thy father and all his houſe; therefore I will play before the Lord, and I will yet be more vile than thus*, 2 Sam. 6. 21. Thus, Chriſtian, wouldeſt thou throw off the vipers of reproaches, which from the fire of the wickeds malice flie upon thee? 'Tis for God that I pray, hear, mortifie my luſt, deny my ſelf of my carnal ſports, profits and pleaſures, that God who hath paſſed by Kings and Princes, to chooſe me a poor wretch to ſtand before him in glory; therefore I will be yet more vile than thus. O Sirs, were there not another world to enjoy God in, yet ſhould we not while we have our being ſerve our Maker? The heavens and the earth obey his Law, that are capable of no reward for doing his Will. *Quench hell, burn heaven, (*ſaid a holy man*) yet I will love and feare my God*; How much more when the everlaſting armes of mercy ſtand ready ſtretch't to carry you aſſoon as the fight is over into the bliſſeful preſence of God! You have ſervants of your own ſo ingenuous and obſervant, that can follow your work hard abroad in all weathers; and may they but when they come home, weary and hungry at night, obtain a kinde look from you, and ſome tender care over them, they are very thankful. *Yea*, (ſaith one, (to ſhame the ſluggiſh Chriſtian) *how many hundred miles will the poor Spaniel run after his Maſter in a journey, who gets nothing but a few crumbs, or a bone from his Maſters trencher?* In a word, which is more, the devils ſlaves, what will they not do and venture at his command, who hath not ſo much to give them, as you to your dog, not a cruſt, not a drop of water to cool their tongue? and ſhall not the joy of heaven which is ſet before the Chriſtian, into which he ſhall aſſuredly enter, make him run his race, endure a ſhort ſcuffle of temptation and affliction? yea ſure, and make him reckon alſo that *theſe are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in him.*

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FINIS.